

In some classes of employment the answer is yes; in others, the answer is no. I think it is fair to say that by and large, with very little margin, our salaries are roughly competitive with those in similar employment outside.

In certain cases there is a shortage, and we have a peculiar problem with which you are no doubt familiar.

Mr. McINTOSH: I am just wondering in what way the committee can help the department by some recommendation in this regard. Sometimes we can; sometimes we cannot.

I occasionally have the feeling that because of what you are able to offer to professional men you are not getting the type of employee the veterans deserve.

Mr. PELLETIER: In most grades we are not unique employers in the government service. The salaries are recommended by the Civil Service Commission and finally set by the treasury board because they cover a great many departments. So, if I may say so with respect, I do not think it is too practical to think in terms of trying to help one department alone, much as I would love that to be done if it were possible.

Mr. McINTOSH: It is our duty as members of this committee to help this department. If there is any way in which we can do so I think it is our duty here to point out to the government, or to parliament, that there are some inequities in this system and to suggest some way of overcoming them. Actually, I think the committee and the department are both working towards the same end but with different ideas on the method of achieving that end. It is possible that some areas are suffering from a lack of the proper type of professional services; and I suggest this could happen in the medical field.

Mr. PELLETIER: I do not think you could say it is actually critical anywhere, although in some areas it is most difficult; and possibly the medical profession generally is the most difficult area.

Of course, we probably feel this more acutely than similar employers outside, such as the general hospitals because of the nature of our patient load. We have managed, however, to keep a pretty high calibre of professional help even though in some instances the quantity is insufficient.

Mr. CHATTERTON: Specifically, what about the supply of nurses? Could Dr. Crawford tell us?

Mr. CRAWFORD: Mr. Chairman, this is indeed a very difficult situation. As has been said here today, civil service salaries are set by a joint study by the Civil Service Commission and the treasury board. We do not always agree with the figures which they set, but they are set in relation to other federal employment.

I think you must bear in mind too that in the federal service we are committed to a federal rate of pay which applies in Halifax, St. John's, Newfoundland, and in Vancouver or Victoria, B.C., whereas in a non-federal service competitive rates are quite different in different areas. This presents problems for us. We are tied to a federal rate, and therefore we run into inequities in certain regions of this country. It is one of the grave disadvantages in attempting to operate a federal service.

On the question Mr. Chatterton raised some time ago about orderlies in Shaughnessy, we have had complaints from orderlies there. They have complained that they are receiving less than orderlies in other hospitals. In other places, however, orderlies are receiving more money than orderlies in other hospitals in the same cities.

However, this is something with which we have to live because we cannot establish regional rates of pay. The moment we establish regional rates of pay we will lose all possibility of mobility and transfer. Therefore, one