

Supply—National Defence

ago. They have a town council. They are encouraged to organize their own services and grants are made by the government in order to maintain this small town for the purpose of looking after the dependants of our service people.

Then again, as I said last year, I have this letter from the then minister of national defence which I should like again to incorporate in *Hansard*. The letter dated August 17, 1960, is addressed to me at post office box 35, Pembroke, Ontario, and reads as follows:

You will remember on a number of occasions you have spoken to me concerning the Pembroke Cottage hospital and the possibility of this department arranging financial assistance for the hospital.

I have carried out a very thorough survey to see whether any assistance in this regard can be given this year but unfortunately, due to financial stringencies, we are unable to be of assistance at present. However, I am taking up the matter with treasury board in order to ascertain, if possible, whether some arrangement might not be made at a future time, perhaps next year.

In the estimates for 1961-62 you will see a reference to a hospital at Middleton, in Nova Scotia, for which \$135,000 was subscribed by the Department of National Defence for the purpose of assisting, as I interpret it—the minister can correct me if I am wrong—in the construction of accommodation for dependants of the army. When I tell you that the population of Petawawa military camp at the present time is approximately 10,000 people made up of 6,300 dependants, surely it should appear obvious to everybody in this committee that something will have to be done with regard to hospitalization at Petawawa. The two hospitals in Pembroke are accepting from 20 per cent to 28 per cent of the patients from the Petawawa military camp.

Surely this is a business matter. It is just a matter of common sense and business. The business is to see what can be done most economically. To construct a hospital in that section of the country would cost \$2½ million. To put them in the General hospital and the Cottage hospital in Pembroke would cost not more than \$250,000.

My suggestion to the minister therefore is this. The officials of both hospitals are prepared to sit down with the senior officers with the Department of National Defence and the minister in order to ascertain whether something cannot be evolved which will satisfy the people of Petawawa military camp who at this time—and I mean this—consider themselves to be second class citizens. Something must be done up there for these 10,000 people. There is no economic assistance for a hospital there for 6,300 people. The situation is absolutely ridiculous. I suggest that a little bit of common sense be displayed. Let us get together with the government on the matter and find out whether some answer

cannot be arrived at. Nobody from the Department of National Defence to my knowledge has been near the place for the last three years.

Mr. Harkness: There are, of course, a large number of requests by various municipalities for assistance as far as hospital construction is concerned directed to the Department of National Defence. We have looked into these matters with a great deal of care and have come to the conclusion that such assistance is justified only if the number of dependants coming into a community increases the total population of that community by more than 10 per cent over a period of five years.

It was under those circumstances that assistance was given as far as Middleton, Nova Scotia was concerned. Several other towns in Nova Scotia have also asked for this assistance, but we have not been able to give it because we did not think the increase justified it. As a matter of fact, all these places like to have a military camp established in order to get business out of it. Then they do not seem to think that the dependants of the people at the military camp should have the same service as other people in the community without paying extra for it.

I do not think this is an equitable way of looking at the matter. In the Pembroke area the situation is that the increase in military dependants population has not been 10 per cent during any five year period and thus, under the rule that we have been obliged to establish, the area does not qualify for a hospital assistance grant.

Mr. Forgie: May I ask the minister whether he has any figures given to him by the Department of National Defence with regard to the situation at Petawawa? Here are some figures that will prove to be interesting. The total estimated cost of the operation at Pembroke was \$743,737 for 38 additional beds. That is the total estimated cost of the operation there, of which \$100,693 will be paid from federal health grants, the province contributing \$117,000. Thus it can be seen that the two senior levels of government are paying a smaller percentage of the total estimated cost in this case than they were in the case at Middleton.

The other question I should like to ask the minister is this. The government has set up Petawawa military camp. It is part of the army. The army is recruiting married couples. What is to happen to the children and the dependants? Where do they come in? Who is to look after them? What about their hospitalization? Is nothing to be done about the matter? Expenditures on hospital beds have increased 10 per cent in the last year from the estimate. Surely these are matters that