

proposed by this government, in regard particularly to ambulance services, will jeopardize the lives of native people in western Canada. My question to the minister is a repetition of one she refused to answer earlier.

An hon. Member: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: I see her refusal is being supported by the NDP.

A hon. Member: Put the question.

Mr. Benjamin: You are sounding like a green backbencher. Ask the question.

Mr. Clark: Will the minister consider with an open mind the argument put by the president of the Indian Association of Alberta, to the effect that the changes introduced will, or may, endanger the lives of native people in western Canada; and if she so finds, after an open examination of that allegation, will she change the policy?

Miss Bégin: Mr. Speaker, at least the NDP are capable of showing emotion. The questioning by the Leader of the Opposition is becoming more and more ridiculous every minute. I am surprised that he does not have the courage to withdraw the type of stupid allegations which are being made on a very important issue dealing with the lives of people. I would like to repeat that the hon. gentleman does not seem to understand that this is not a matter for politicking.

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): Time for a new minister.

Miss Bégin: I am convinced that we need guidelines regarding the control of reasonable expenditures for all Indian people in need of health services, but eyeglasses have nothing to do with the lives of people.

I would like to repeat that the hon. gentleman does not seem to understand that the usual health services will continue exactly as they have in the past. The Leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Athabasca seem to have forgotten that I have said the last paragraph of my telex was probably the most important: that is obvious, because I asked the chiefs to send to me, immediately, information on any cases of hardship which they have witnessed across the country because I would like to look into such matters personally.

Nine days ago, when I met briefly with the maritime delegation, they spoke to me of abuse and the death of some people. Immediately I asked for a dossier on the situation, and I have not received one single name. I have had an assistant deputy minister travel across the country to obtain the names of people and to look for hardships caused by my department, guidelines or no guidelines, and he has received no information. That is what I would like to look into right away.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Oral Questions

VETERANS AFFAIRS

LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE PENSIONS

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Veterans Affairs.

In view of the fact that thus far in this session there has been no legislation respecting veterans, will the minister do his best between now and the time we meet again to persuade his colleagues in the cabinet to permit him to bring in legislation respecting the pensions of widows of disabled pensioners, and also respecting the tying of the rate of the 100 per cent disability pension to the composite level designated in the Pension Act? Would the minister also be ready to report to us in January on the review of the War Veterans Allowance Act?

Hon. Daniel J. MacDonald (Minister of Veterans Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the references which were made by the hon. member are under consideration in my department and we will have something to say about them at a later date.

With regard to the review of the War Veterans Allowance Act, it is coming along quite well and I hope to have something presented to me some time in February.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question to the minister deals with war veterans allowance recipients.

Would the minister tell the House whether he now has clearance from Treasury Board that such recipients who also receive either the increased GIS due in January or increases in their child benefits will not have these increases cut off their war veterans allowance?

Mr. MacDonald (Cardigan): Mr. Speaker, I am able to be quite positive on that matter this morning. The recipients of the war veterans allowance who receive the GIS increase and the children's benefits will also receive the benefits previously passed under the national health and welfare act and they will apply to the recipients of the veterans allowance and the civilian war allowance.

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POST OFFICE

POSTAL SERVICE IN FORT HOPE, ONT.

Mr. B. Keith Penner (Thunder Bay): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Postmaster General. Is the minister aware of the extremely serious deterioration in postal service in the Indian Community of Fort Hope in northern Ontario? This deterioration has been brought about because of an alleged misappropriation of funds by a postal employee whom the Post Office apparently neglected to bond in the usual way?

Will the minister explain to the House why the entire community is being punished for an alleged wrongdoing by a postal employee? What action is being taken to restore postal service to the Indian community of Fort Hope?