

*Proceedings on Adjournment Motion*

development of an exclusively northern region of medical services, some levelling off in the rate of expansion now seems reasonable, especially since the major causes of the high rates of disease and death are not related either to lack of public health effort or to lack of treatment facilities.

Sixty per cent of the population of the Northwest Territories is comprised of Indians and Eskimos whose mode of living belongs to a more primitive age than that of the populations of the southern provinces. The high birth rates and the high proportion of young people in the population increases problems of child care in the homes. Poverty, the low level of socio-economic development, lack of education in the older age groups, the severe climate, inadequate housing and overcrowding of the limited space a family can afford to heat, all play a significant role as causes of pneumonia, accidents and diseases of infancy.

During the year 1966 the chief causes of death in the Northwest Territories were pneumonia, 22.3 per cent, injuries and violence, 18.9 per cent and malformations and diseases associated with infancy, 17.9 per cent. During the past few years great strides have been made toward the improvement of living conditions. Whole settlements have been rebuilt. Special attention has been paid to

public health engineering problems affecting the provision of potable water at all seasons, and safe, sanitary disposal of sewage.

In 1956 the infant mortality rate for Eskimos was 240 per 1,000 live births. By 1966 this had fallen to 100, for Eskimos. For all groups the infant mortality rate was 140 in 1956 and by 1966 it had fallen to below 80. Measures such as a full program of immunization and health education by public health nurses and trained community health workers are carried on in greater intensity in northern communities than in any other part of Canada. Improved diagnostic programs are turning up more cases of tuberculosis; but this is considered to be the result of increased effectiveness rather than lack of good health practices. Improved housing and nutrition will complement the role of the health department.

In the current year a total of \$7,880,000 is being directed to northern health services. This is an increase of 14 per cent over the corresponding sum of \$6,920,000 for the year 1966-67. Such a rate of growth repeated year after year would be abnormal and the intention for the year 1968-69 is to hold the line at essentially the current year's level and allocate \$7,900,000 to northern health services.

Motion agreed to and the house adjourned at 10.10 p.m.

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