

cure to simply put drug addicts behind bars. However, we realized that the question of treatment was a provincial matter, and, so we recommended that the provinces should establish treatment centres for drug addicts. I am pleased to note that, with some financial assistance from the provincial Government, a small centre has been started in Vancouver. I believe it has only eight beds, but it will give assistance to drug addicts who voluntarily apply for treatment. I sincerely trust that this experiment will prove successful.

Honourable senators, I want to seriously warn certain people in British Columbia—people who do not know what they are talking about—who are making irresponsible statements and advocating the setting up of a system whereby drug addicts could obtain supplies at government clinics. Some of them claim this system works in Great Britain. I would point out to them that it is remarkably strange that Great Britain, which is a member of a fifteen-country committee set up by the United Nations Narcotic Commission, is actually opposed to the establishment of clinics where drug addicts could get free drugs. In all the meetings held by this fifteen-country committee, Great Britain has never once advocated such a system. We maintain that giving free drugs to addicts would be similar to giving whisky to an alcoholic every time he wanted it. If he wanted two bottles you would give him two, and if he wanted three you would give him three, and so on. An opinion poll was conducted in Vancouver and it is rather interesting to learn the number of people who favour the setting up of a system which would give drug addicts free supplies or drugs at cost. Sixty-six per cent of the men and 75 per cent of the women polled thought that this system would be a cure-all. A minister of the gospel on Vancouver Island wrote quite an article advocating the giving of free drugs to addicts, "just as," he said, "they do in Great Britain".

Hon. Mrs. Hodges: Would the honourable senator mind repeating the figures he just gave?

Hon. Mr. Reid: Perhaps I should read the question that was contained in the poll. It is as follows:

One suggestion to fight drug addiction, an addicts' crime, is to take large profit out of the illegal drug trade. To do this the Government would set up clinics, supervised by doctors, at which addicts could register and legally receive drugs at cost. Do you favour this suggestion or not?

To this inquiry 66 per cent of the men and 75 per cent of the women replied in the affirmative.

Hon. Mr. Horner: Was this poll conducted amongst drug addicts or the population generally?

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Hon. Mr. Reid: The population generally. Honourable senators, in view of these statements which are leaving an erroneous impression, and in view of the seriousness of the matter, I thought I would take a few moments to place this matter before the Senate and the Government. I wish to take this opportunity to say to the Government that I trust when they get time they will examine the report made by the Senate's Special Committee on the Traffic in Narcotic Drugs in Canada. Some have said that that report was the best document ever put out on the subject. I know that representations are being made to the new Minister of Health and Welfare and to the new Minister of Justice to supply free drugs to drug addicts under some supervised system, but your committee recommended very strongly against such a thing.

Honourable senators, that is all I have to say this afternoon.

Hon. Calvert C. Pratt: Honourable senators, I wish to speak for a short while to the motion for an Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. But first I should like to congratulate His Honour the Speaker upon his appointment to the Chair of this house. I hope, sir that you will find it interesting and enjoyable to preside over the deliberations in this chamber, and I am sure your administration of your high office will be completely satisfactory to the members of this house.

I also want to offer my best wishes to the mover (Hon. Mr. White), and the seconder (Hon. Mr. Méthot) of the Address in Reply. They are new members of this house, and I hope that they and the other new members will have a long and useful career in the Senate. May I take the liberty of personally offering my congratulations and extending a welcome to them. There is a lot of use, and great use, for the Senate in the government of Canada. This is a modest chamber, perhaps over-modest and retiring in its self-appraisal, and certainly so in its public relations. In these days, when public opinion is greatly influenced by headlines, TV panel discussions and political shouting, such services as the Senate performs are not as widely known as they should be. The sphere of usefulness is here just the same, and it is up to us all to do our part to develop it.

Honourable senators, the opening of Parliament this session has been an event which we shall all remember with great pride and pleasure. For me, as for most of us no doubt, it brought a revival of that feeling of emotion and loyalty which in my young days