

the interdepartmental committee, and I was surprised to hear him indicate that such minutes had not been kept. My information is that minutes are kept of the meetings of the interdepartmental committee.

Mr. HARRIS (Danforth): I am glad to hear that. Are these regular meetings?

Mr. RALSTON: No; they are not held at regular intervals. Some of the dates were: November 30, December 18, January 2, January 22, February 25, March 9, March 14, April 3, April 27. I think they meet whenever there is business to be done, and they meet to deal with special cases as they come up, rather than with routine matters. However, it might be well to consider having them meet more regularly.

Mr. HARRIS (Danforth): It is gratifying to learn that the committee has had thirteen meetings since those recommendations were made.

To get back to hospital matters for a moment, the condition which obtains in the maritimes, and which was so well put forward by the leader of the opposition, also obtains in other parts of Canada. I should not like the impression to go abroad that the cost of construction of civilian institutions is double the cost of construction in the case of hospitals under the Department of National Defence. As you, Mr. Chairman, very well know, the difference arises because of the fact that the cost of heat, light, power, land, depreciation charges and all the other elements which go into the cost of a self-contained civilian hospital, even down to the personnel, do not go into the cost of a national defence institution. Personnel is paid for out of the general vote, whereas with the civilian institution personnel has to be paid for by that civilian institution. I should not like the impression to go abroad that the cost is double; I think the minister will agree with that.

Mr. RALSTON: I had just two figures in mind. I shall not mention them for fear they are not accurate. The figure was at so much per bed, and it was about double. But that was capital expenditure, not maintenance.

Last night the hon. member for Renfrew South (Mr. McCann) spoke about Wassermann tests, and I shall not deal with that matter again.

Then there was a recommendation with regard to the building up in Canada of a blood bank. The subcommittee recommended that the suggestion be given careful consideration; the comment is that dried human serum is now being recommended in lieu of whole blood, in the form of a blood bank, for

[Mr. Ralston.]

the treatment of war casualties, and the production of suitable quantities of this product is now well in hand and is being supplied to all military districts in Canada and overseas. In addition, a certain number of personnel have been typed and are available for transfusions, if found necessary.

The subcommittee also made a report and recommendations in the matter of medical stores and supplies. The action taken in that regard is this. A survey of the medical stores branch is now being conducted, and steps have also been taken by the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps to provide added staff where necessary, and to investigate further possible improvements. I believe there is decided activity in that direction, and I believe the hon. member took a particular interest in it.

Mr. HARRIS (Danforth): There is great room for it, too.

Mr. RALSTON: Then there was a recommendation with regard to meat supplies. The subcommittee recommended that consideration be given to a proposal submitted by the packers for the saving of fat from beef carcasses by having such fat trimmed from the carcass at the packing plant and the purchase of pork in trimmed cuts, leaving with the packer such parts as spareribs, tail, fat, skin, hocks, bones, scrap and belly.

The action taken was that after careful study of this proposal it was decided that to provide the greatest possible variety of meat dishes it would be more advantageous to continue the purchase of beef and fresh pork in sides and carcasses. So that there is no waste, steps are taken to ensure the use of all the residue parts of the beef and hog carcasses; mincing machines with sausage attachments are provided, together with authority for the purchase of sausage casings, seasonings, et cetera. I remember in that connection meeting with a cook on the Pacific coast who wanted a sausage machine. I promised to get him one, and it has gone to him. The machine is very useful, in fact, from the point of view of dietetics, and also from that of saving.

Recipes have been circulated to all units, giving complete instructions for the making of beef and pork sausage, headcheese, pickled pork and corned beef. The issue of three ounces of lard per man per day has been discontinued, so that cooks are now compelled to obtain this supply from the dripping and rendering of fats of meats to which reference has been made. All other residue of meats from kitchens, such as bones, rough fat, and