

Supply—Health and Welfare

Indian affairs branch—
Education—

644. Construction or acquisition of buildings, works, land and new equipment—further amount required, \$40,000.

Mr. Fulton: Mr. Chairman, this \$40,000 is a very definite amount. Would the minister say on what account it arises? Is it for another building?

Mr. Pickersgill: Yes, it is another building. We found we could get ahead more rapidly than we had hoped for with plans for schools, and we think we can build one more school.

Mr. Fulton: Where?

Mr. Pickersgill: In the Qu'Appelle valley. It is very badly needed.

Item agreed to.

DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL HEALTH AND WELFARE
245. Departmental administration, \$1,246,846.

Mr. Nicholson: I wonder if the minister is not now prepared to make some statement on the question of a nation-wide health program following the suggestion of the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggan, or would he prefer that I proceed with my speech first? Well, first of all I wish to congratulate the minister on cutting across party lines and sending the hon. member for Lanark as one of the Canadian delegates to the recent meeting of the world health organization. I think the outstanding speech delivered by the hon. member last night justified the minister's confidence in him.

At this point I should like to offer a suggestion to the minister. I think his information section is falling down with reference to the problems and work of the world health organization. When a member such as the hon. member for Lanark takes on an assignment, the minister's information section should be interested in getting this story told across Canada. I checked with the hon. member for Lanark, and he has indicated he is prepared to speak anywhere at any time on world health. Certainly the Canadian people need information regarding the health problems in the world and what could be done.

I understand the minister deserves some credit for having moved the original motion setting up the world health organization. Again I must congratulate him on his foresight in helping to establish this specialized agency. But, having said that, I must say I am disappointed that after all these years we are spending so little on the work of the world health organization.

We are spending this year \$289,958, which works out at a little less than two cents per person in Canada. After giving two cents per person, we have asked for change back,

[Mr. Blackmore.]

and we received \$10,042 change back. If the Canadian people had the sort of information given to them that was given by the hon. member for Lanark, we would want to raise our contribution to at least a nickel per person per year. When we consider the items that were set out when the world health organization was established and the long distance we have to travel before they are realized, it is obvious that something better has to be done. The minister helped to set up those original objectives. They declare:

In conformity with the charter of the United Nations, that the following principles are basic to the happiness, harmonious relations and security of all peoples.

There are nine important paragraphs, and I am going to refer to only two or three of them:

Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition.

The health of all peoples is fundamental to the attainment of peace and security and is dependent upon the fullest co-operation of individuals and states.

Unequal development in different countries in the promotion of health and control of disease, especially communicable disease, is a common danger.

When I consider what we have accomplished in Canada during my lifetime, I believe that, if we could use a little more imagination in the whole world, we might be able to accomplish in the next 50 years what we have accomplished in Canada. During my lifetime we have seen our life expectancy increased. I am sorry to have to go to the United States for expectancy figures at the beginning of the century, but our figures are very comparable to those of the United States throughout the years. In 1900, the year when I was born, males had a life expectancy of 47·9 years, as compared with 66·3 now, an increase of 18·4. Although women are supposed to belong to the weaker sex, it probably comes as a surprise to most members that they live several years longer than men. At the beginning of the century women had a life expectancy of 50·7 as compared with 70·8 in 1951.

In the field of infant mortality we again have a record in Canada that should give us a good deal of pride and satisfaction. Canada has not the best record in the world, and has not the worst record, but there has been a very interesting improvement in our position in the last 20 or 30 years. Canada's infant mortality rate in 1951, as recorded by the bureau of statistics, was 38, as compared with 21 in Sweden, 23 in New Zealand, 25