

planned to erect a new nurses' home for this institution at a cost of about \$200,000." There are only nine resident nurses — it does not give the number of nurses in training. The figures seem to be out of proportion.

**Mr. Smallwood** Costs have gone up. The nurses' home was built several years ago.

*[The Secretary read the next section,<sup>1</sup> and the committee adjourned to 8 pm]*

**Mr. McCarthy** In the list of cottage hospitals, the total revenue is given in comparison with the expenditures and most of them with the exception of Old Perlican seem to have collected 30% to 50% of the expenditure. This one was only about approximately 12%. I would like the Committee to explain the reason for the difference.

**Mr. Ashbourne** I took up the matter with the secretary of the Department of Public Health and Welfare. The Old Perlican cottage hospital, for the year 1946, collected about \$11,000 but in 1945 the amount is shown here as \$3,000. I understand there was no board of health there previously, or otherwise it was not properly organised. That would account for it.

**Mr. Smallwood** I rise to explain how that error occurred, that we were discussing this afternoon. You will remember the infant mortality rates as compared with other countries. This is a copy of the official year book of the Commonwealth of Australia. This chapter on vital statistics gives their statistics and also statistics for other countries. On page 339, there is a table showing the infant mortality of many countries. Any gentleman who wishes to look at it can see that the figure is 21.4 in Canada; in South Africa 25.3; in the United States 17.9; Great Britain 15; Australia 15; New Zealand 22.6. I copied those figures from the Australia year book 1942-43. In doing so the mistake is made. Although the headline is 'Infant Mortality' there is also 'Crude Birth Rate.' I discovered it and made some corrections in ink. I was in the right table but in the wrong column of that table. If there is any impression in anyone's mind that that was done deliberately, I am most anxious to convince the whole House that it was an honest mistake that any gentleman would have made if he were copying from that same table.

*[After some discussion, the section was adopted.]*

*The Secretary then read the next section]<sup>2</sup>*

**Mr. Smallwood** ...It is worth noting, if members took the trouble to add up that first page of statistics — 1934-35 up to 1946-47 — the total amount spent is \$45½ million for the 13 years that Commission of Government has been here. The total amount they have spent in that one department, Health and Welfare, is \$3.5 million a year on average — starting at \$2 million and ending up at \$6 million. We all feel that the public health part of that department has been very good. There has been big development in public health institutions and services. It has cost, along with the rest, \$45 million. A staggering sum of money!

**Mr. Newell** ...The 1945-46 figures are more up to date in that they are the actual expenditures for last year. As for the 1946-47 figures, they were compiled one month ago. It should not be more than a few thousand dollars out. One other correction: in the last section "War Pensions", 1943-44, this figure should be \$476,325.

**Mr. Vardy** We are making some wild jumps there. I know figures are a bit monotonous, but I wonder if we are giving sufficient information to the country. I realise a whole lot of this information will be given more fully, but I am inclined to think we are making big jumps there. All the details are not given. If we do not read more figures, we will be through the report tomorrow and the country will know little or nothing about what we are spending \$6 million for. It is the heaviest spending department in the government, especially if we bear in mind that the Department of Public Works is spending a large amount. We should, as far as possible, give the country what information we can.

**Mr. Chairman** I think all these figures will be published in the newspapers. I suggest the constant reiteration of figures becomes utterly meaningless, even to the most intelligent men. You cannot grasp a series of figures delivered one after the other without a break. I do not think the people would appreciate it. If anybody wishes to comment on the figures, that is another matter. If you want your constituents to read them they will probably do so.

**Mr. Vardy** I am not thinking of my constituents. I had a telephone call from a man who complained that the cottage hospital figures were

<sup>1</sup>Volume II:269.

<sup>2</sup>Volume II:272.