

PART III.—NATIONAL VOLUNTARY HEALTH AND WELFARE ACTIVITIES

A number of national voluntary agencies carry on important work in the provision of health and welfare services, planning and education. These agencies, some of which are described below, supplement the services of the federal and provincial authorities in many fields and play a leading role in stimulating public awareness of health and welfare needs and in promoting action to meet them.

The Canadian Welfare Council.—The Council, established in 1920, is a national voluntary association of organizations and individual citizens whose aim is to further the development of social services in Canada. Member organizations include community funds and councils, other private social agencies, various federal, provincial and municipal departments, and citizen groups and individuals active in the fields of health, welfare and recreation. It furnishes authoritative information, technical consultation and field service in the main areas of social welfare and provides a means of co-operative planning and action by public and private agencies.

The policies and programs of the Council are determined by its members under the leadership of a nationally representative board of governors. Aided by professional staff, the members work together through Divisions of Family and Child Welfare, Recreation, Public Welfare, Corrections, and Community Chests and Councils, and through special committees on such subjects as welfare of immigrants and the aging. Departments of the Council include the Information Branch and French Speaking Services. Council publications include the periodicals *Canadian Welfare* and *Bien-Être Social Canadien*, a directory of Canadian welfare services, pamphlets, and division bulletins.

The Canadian Red Cross Society.—Established in 1896 in Canada, the Society is affiliated with the International Red Cross and has branches in all ten provinces with a national headquarters in Toronto. Its objectives, defined in its Charter, are “. . . in time of peace or war to carry on and assist in work for the improvement of health, the prevention of disease and the mitigation of suffering throughout the world”. Its activities cover a very broad area, ranging from national and international disaster relief services to the support of local projects. One of its major activities in Canada has been the operation of blood banks in co-operation with provincial health departments; it also maintains outpost hospitals, nursing stations and emergency units in several provinces. The Junior Red Cross promotes health education through its schoolroom branches across Canada; it supports a special fund to supply treatment to indigent handicapped children in Canada and a fund to promote international understanding.

Victorian Order of Nurses.*—Since its inception in 1897, the Victorian Order of Nurses has provided a professional home nursing and health counselling service. In all provinces except Prince Edward Island, the association's nurses carry out bedside nursing, prenatal, postnatal and newborn care. In some provinces they also assist provincial health authorities in tuberculosis and venereal disease programs and conduct child health clinics. In 1958 the Order had 117 branches located in nine provinces. The national office is in Ottawa.

The Canadian National Institute for the Blind.—Since its inception in 1918 the Canadian National Institute for the Blind has been dedicated to the provision of rehabilitation and social welfare services to the blind and to those with partial sight. The national office, located in Toronto, serves all provinces through its seven regional divisions and 46 branches. The Institute provides both social services and financial assistance; it arranges for examinations and eye treatment services, purchases glasses for needy individuals and operates an eye bank. Under an extensive rehabilitation program with training facilities centred in Toronto, it trains blind persons in various occupations,

* A more complete picture of visiting nursing services of the Order may be found in the 1957-58 Year Book, pp. 269-270.