

URGE CARE OF FEEBLE-MINDED

Sir William Hearst Tells De- putation That Action Will be Taken

The Government intends dealing with the problem of caring for the feeble-minded in a comprehensive way as soon as the report of Mr. Justice Hodgins with regard to the matter is received. This was the statement of Sir William Hearst, Prime Minister, to a deputation from the Ontario Association for the Care of the Feeble-minded, which waited on the Government yesterday morning. The deputation included interested parties from all parts of Ontario, and certain resolutions reached by the visitors at a meeting held earlier in the morning were presented to the Government. Appreciation was expressed of the efforts the Government has already put forth, and an earnest appeal was made for a more advanced policy.

The first speaker, Rev. Canon Plumptre, stated that the object of the deputation was more to give the Prime Minister and his colleagues assurance that any steps the Government might take would have the warm support of the people of the Province. It was not the object to suggest a policy for the Government.

The need for clearing out the plague spots at home before the soldiers return from the front was urged by Mrs. P. D. Crerar of Hamilton, who commended the Government for launching an offensive on the venereal disease problem, but gave it as her opinion that if the feeble-minded problem was first attacked, the authorities would be striking a blow at the other problem. She expressed the opinion that venereal disease was traceable to the large increase in the number of feeble-minded persons in the Province.

A Provincial Responsibility.

Ex-Controller J. O. McCarthy said the problem should not be left to hap-hazard municipal action, but should be treated as a Provincial responsibility. He believed the municipalities were ready to bear their share of the cost, and to accept responsibility for caring for children of school age, but they felt that the Government should accept the task of looking after adults. It was obvious that it would be useless for the municipalities to spend money in caring for children if they were to be turned back into society when they reached the most dangerous age.

In reply the Prime Minister said the problem was deserving of serious consideration, and the Government had appointed a commissioner to report upon the matter, not merely from a custodial and curative standpoint, but also from the standpoint of financial responsibility. "As soon as that report is received," said he, "it will receive not only our thought and consideration, but action along the line that we feel should be taken."