

*Supply—Health and Welfare*

per thousand of population, whereas they now have 7 beds per thousand of population. Of course the minister takes a good deal of credit for the federal grants that are given for those hospital beds, but they are very small grants compared with the expense of building a hospital; indeed they are relatively small grants. For example, how much would the grant be for the hospital in the city of Saskatoon which has cost the province of Saskatchewan millions of dollars? Would it be 10 per cent of the cost?

**Mr. Martin:** A little bit higher than that. My hon. friend will remember on that particular occasion the great tribute the premier of Saskatchewan paid to the present government's national health plan.

**Mr. Coldwell:** I know. As I say, I am willing to give credit where credit is due. But the initiative came from the people of that province, just as the initiative is coming from the people of British Columbia and the people of Alberta to provide the hospitals. Of course the federal government aid is very welcome.

I said that 10 per cent of the cost—the minister says the figure is a little higher than that—is the contribution of the federal government to that hospital plan, as far as the building of hospitals is concerned. I therefore say, don't wait for the hospitals, because if you institute this plan all across the country public opinion will force co-operative efforts—province, municipality or what you will—to provide the hospitals. Give us the plan and the people will soon build the hospitals and equip them.

If I may just digress for a moment I should like to say this. One of the satisfying things when I went back to Saskatchewan after this plan was in effect was to find the manner in which the local people had co-operated. I do not mean municipal bodies only, but actually the local people. For example, I went down to a little place called Kyle in my constituency, where they had built a 16-bed hospital. I walked in and on one of the doors I saw a brass plate on which were inscribed these words: "This ward furnished by the ladies' guild of the Matador farm". Again, in the village of Delisle, when I went to the hospital there one of the governors of the hospital said to me, "Look in there at that electrical equipment. How do you think we obtained that?" I said, "I don't know". He said, "The Bentley boys, the two hockey players, contributed that electrical equipment". What I have said with regard to these two instances can be multiplied over and over again.

**Mr. Trainor:** Voluntary effort.

**Mr. Coldwell:** Yes, voluntary effort. May I say to the good gentleman, who is a doctor, that I do not decry voluntary effort. I think voluntary effort is a good thing. But voluntary effort in cases like this must supplement public effort. That is the point. As long as people sit back and say "We have to wait for somebody else to do it", it will never be done. I therefore say that the people who must take the initiative are the members of this parliament and the government of Canada.

**Mr. Low:** Mr. Chairman, I always find the discussion of the estimates of the Minister of National Health and Welfare most interesting and stimulating, chiefly because we regard the health of our Canadian people as the greatest asset we have. Without that health it would be impossible for us to be a strong and vital nation.

I also find this discussion stimulating and most interesting because we have unfolded here the great drama of man's conquest of disease and conditions that contribute to disease in this country and throughout the whole world. That was the reason I was keenly interested in the report of the hon. member for Lanark on his trip to the world health organization conference. I was glad to hear the things he had to say. I was particularly glad to hear him assure the members of this house that the money Canada contributes to the world health organization is well spent. I am sure the members of the house generally were keenly interested in what he had to say about how science is winning in the battle against disease, particularly malaria.

As he spoke of malaria I was reminded of some of the things I saw when I visited British East Africa and Israel last year. I could not help thinking about something that happened in Israel particularly. As recently as 1948, when the Jewish government was set up in that state, the plain of Sharon at the very narrow waist of that country was practically uninhabitable for white people simply because of the prevalence of malaria-carrying mosquitos. It was actually in the hands of Arab owners at the time. I am told by the authorities in Israel that they were able to get possession of that fertile and wonderful part of the country for a ridiculously small sum of money. They applied science to the malaria-carrying mosquitos and were able to clear the area and build it up, until now it is one of the finest citrus-producing parts of the whole country and the land itself is perhaps more valuable per acre than any other comparable part of the country. That is just an indication of the kind of thing being done by men of science all over the world.