

*Supply—Health and Welfare*

However, a healthy body without a healthy mind means little. We know of course that even with a sickly body a man may perhaps enjoy much of life with that kind of education which will give people self-satisfaction and happiness. We do agree, however, that those are the two great considerations, education and health.

As it happens, under our constitution those are both primarily and in fact exclusively under the jurisdiction of the provincial governments. Nevertheless it has been recognized that there are reasons for seeking a common ground in regard to plans for the improvement of the health facilities of this country, because of the increasing cost and the extent to which many of the things that go into the improvement of the health of our people do fall in one way or another under the control of the federal authorities.

The requirement which must be fulfilled for any satisfactory solution of this problem is that there be agreement between the federal and provincial governments in regard to the way this problem will be tackled. Much has been done and millions of dollars have been spent on inquiries to obtain the essential information which will make it possible to discuss this subject with an accurate knowledge of the statistical information which is essential to reach conclusions. However, the provinces have now made reports based upon these inquiries, and it is essential that steps be taken now to deal with this subject.

When I said there was agreement in regard to the need of providing everything that will improve the health of our people, I think there will also be agreement without any question upon this proposition. In this country of ours, fortunate in the extreme in the opportunities presented to its people, it must be our purpose within the framework of our constitution to make sure in every way we can that the health and certainly the life of no Canadian, regardless of where he lives or what his circumstances may be, shall be imperilled because of lack of opportunity to have proper diagnosis, proper medical treatment and proper surgery if necessary. I feel sure that we will all agree that every Canadian, regardless of his financial position or where he may live, should be afforded the opportunity for that early diagnosis and early treatment, as well as the other things that go to the improvement of health that will give him every opportunity within this society of ours. That should be the purpose, whether there may be differences of opinion as to the method that should be followed.

We have stated most clearly our own position in regard to some of the aspects of this

problem. We do not believe that the doctors of Canada should be conscripted as the servants of the state under a rigid plan which would destroy much of that personal relationship which has contributed so much to the constant improvement of medical services in this country. We believe that among the many opportunities for the exercise of personal freedom should be the freedom of our people to choose their own doctors, and the freedom of the doctors themselves within our society.

We have stated that we do not believe in state medicine as that term is generally understood. We believe that in this country, with its tremendous distances and enormous area occupied by only 15 million people, a rigid pattern such as may have been adopted in any other country would defeat the very purpose that we are sure all our people have in mind.

When we say that, however, we do not for one moment concede that anything should prevent that proper medical treatment and proper medical care. On the contrary we think the wealth of this country, the resources of this country and the freedom of this country should provide the opportunity for the highest measure of medical and surgical treatment. We feel sure that in a country blessed as this country has been, treatment at the very highest level should be available to our people, no matter what their means may be.

What the actual plan will be in detail can be determined only by consultation with the provincial governments under whose jurisdiction personal health has been placed by our constitution. Having reached the point we have in the inquiries that have been conducted, having obtained the basic information which is essential, we do believe there should be no further delay in seeking a solution of this problem and establishing that basic pattern which will be acceptable to the governments of this country. It would be unfortunate if an attempt were made by this government to establish a rigid pattern without that proper consultation. However, the opportunity to reach an agreed pattern should not be delayed.

It will be recalled that recently at the preliminary conference among the governments of this country the premier of Ontario stated publicly that he believed no further time should be lost in seeking a solution of this problem. Naturally I am not aware of what took place in those closed conferences. It may well be that the premiers of other provinces made some statements at that time. In any event we do know that the head of the government of one of the largest provinces