

distribution of essential foods to Canadian families of small means, especially where there are young children.

8. To utilize the dominion-provincial conferences for the drafting of housing plans for urban and rural communities with a view to reallocating population as economic and hygienic considerations demand. The scope of such plans should include provision for wider electrification of rural homes, and the improvement of homes now occupied by families in the low income group.

9. To see that all residual problems of social assistance, such as provision for the aged, blind, handicapped or dependent persons, can be dealt with swiftly and flexibly. This purpose can best be served by developing provincial agencies, assisted by the dominion welfare fund. Local administration of such agencies is essential if each case is to be treated on its own merits.

10. To develop a system of contributory social insurance against the ordinary hazards of community life on a sound actuarial basis, with the dominion government holding and guaranteeing the reserves, rather than resorting to handouts such as the family allowance proposal.

I believe that during these tragic war years we surely must have learned a lot. I believe we have learned more than we ever learned before. The importance of health and fitness of our men and women has been brought home to us more forcibly than we thought possible. The health of a citizen in British Columbia or in Prince Edward Island is just as important to the sound stability of this nation as the health of a citizen in Ontario or any other province. We can maintain our social services in sound unison with that forward-marching enterprise and development awaiting this young country, if we but use our common sense. The policy I have proposed decentralizes control instead of ignoring the right and function of other legislative bodies.

Health and welfare will then cease to be an election football. The hon. members who sit to your right, Mr. Speaker, have kicked it around the political field ever since their convention of 1919, twenty-five years ago.

Mr. FRASER (Peterborough West): And there has not been a touchdown yet.

Mr. ROWE: When this sounder programme is put into effect, it should be to the mutual interest of all legislative bodies, independent of politics, to carry it out in the common and broad interests of our national health and welfare, about which there cannot be much issue. Why should the matter of health be

[Mr. Rowe.]

kept in the federal field when originally under the British North America Act it was not so intended? We realize that we are entering a new age and that after the war we shall need more health and welfare services. Let us meet the issue now, instead of talking about it every four years and then dropping it. Let us meet it now, once for all, so that it will be dealt with consistently in the future.

It is not my purpose to criticize in detail the budget or the many errors in the administration of last year's budget, nor yet the personnel of the government that sits to your right, Mr. Speaker. However, I deem it my duty, representing truly Progressive Conservative principles, to offer a constructive warning against the tendency of the present administration. May I therefore confine my observations chiefly to the trend towards bureaucratic control, the failure to marshal our forces, the unsoundness of our excessive taxation, unbridled expenditures, and the disparity of farm prices.

The trend of government policy in regard to these matters is to-day halting individual enterprise and beckoning state control. In patriotic submission our people have yielded to controls, regulations, restraints and restrictions to assist the government in its gigantic task. However, our people expect the minimum of these bureaucratic controls, even in war time, and most certainly they expect their elimination after the war if peace time freedom is to be restored in this dominion. Under the War Measures Act the powers of the executive are almost unlimited. Such authority can become a danger to democratic institutions, even if it can temporarily be reconciled as a war necessity. For many years we have been lectured in this house on the rights of parliament. The present Prime Minister has opposed most vigorously the vicious practice of government by order in council. As I listened to him in my younger days in the house he was an inspiration to me with respect to the rights of parliament, but not so much to-day.

An hon. MEMBER: He has lost his glamour.

Mr. ROWE: My hon. friend says that he has lost his glamour. I think of all the inconsistencies between his preaching and his practice. Long ago he stated in this house that government by order in council should end. He will remember well that statement. He said that it was opposed to representative government. True, we are in war and we must have some regimentation, but it is alarming