

(c) Sick Mariners:

The Federal Government, through the Department of National Health and Welfare, provides medical and hospital services on a prepaid basis to members of foreigngoing ships arriving in Canada, of coastal vessels in the interprovincial trade, under certain conditions of Federal Government vessels and, on an elective basis, of fishing vessels. Under this program, which has been in existence since Confederation, and is perhaps one of the oldest health insurance schemes in the world, treatment is provided for periods up to a year for all conditions except prolonged mental illness.

The program is financed through a tonnage tax on the ships concerned. Of the some 125,000 covered under the programs in a year, about 20,000 are Canadians. Total expenditures are now about \$700,000 in a year and approximately 15,000 persons are treated each year.

4. THE NATIONAL HEALTH PROGRAM

A federal health activity of interest and importance to all provinces is, of course, the National Health Program which, since its inauguration in 1948, has made grants available to assist the provinces in assessing their own health needs and strengthening and improving their facilities and services.

The following facts and figures will, I think, unfold a story of unprecedented progress in health. During the seven years covered by the program.

- more than 800 individual hospital construction projects have been undertaken;
- space for more than 65,000 beds all types has been made available under the Hospital Construction Grant;
- 9,100 health workers of various categories obtained professional training to enable them to give better service;
- 4,500 have been added to the ranks of Canada's public health workers by being employed under the grants by provinces, municipalities, hospitals and voluntary agencies;
- in addition to the greatly increased provincial, municipal and voluntary expenditures, more than \$154,000,000 have been spent through the federal grants program during the period covered by the program.