

the responsibility of the provincial legislature. The response to these submissions has not been favourable in any province except the province of New Brunswick.

Compare this response with that in the United States where all 50 states have such legislation in force. There, children must have a certificate in order to be admitted to school and if a case of measles breaks out, all members of the school must show an immunization record as proof of having been vaccinated. If no such proof is available, they are excluded from school. It is only through well supervised programs of this nature that the 1982 goal of completely eliminating the disease within that country will be realized.

● (2225)

Relating this back to Canada, Mr. Speaker, since supplies of the vaccine are already available at the provincial level it seems to me that the federal government's role should not only entail providing educational information and encouraging universal acceptance of vaccination programs, especially those relating to certain age groups, but it should also be encouraging the remainder of the provinces to enact legislation which would facilitate the degree of control now being achieved over the disease in the United States. In this way we would be encouraging a national health strategy to eliminate indigenous measles in Canada. A commitment must be made by the federal government to do this.

Mr. Doug Frith (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, may I just begin by saying that the minister is in agreement with everything the hon. member has said in his preamble. I think the hon. member has correctly pointed out the saddest situation that can arise, which is when the government or the medical profession has the wherewithal and the weapons to eliminate disease and we find these are not being used properly. From a

medical practitioner's standpoint, that is one of the saddest things in terms of trying to educate the public.

As an example of that, Mr. Speaker, the major commitment of the World Health Organization in the 1970s was to eradicate smallpox on a worldwide scale. From the medical practitioner's standpoint, one realizes that that is much more difficult in terms of immunization than it would be in the case of measles. I think basically what we have to do as a national government is educate the Canadian public as to the ease with which we can eliminate or eradicate the incidence of measles in Canada. We have to begin by educating the parents to have their youngsters undergo vaccination prior to their entering school, or at least in their very early school years.

The hon. member for Hamilton West (Mr. Hudecki) points out quite correctly that roughly one in every 15 reported cases results in ear infections and pulmonary pneumonia. As he mentioned, we have severe brain inflammation in one out of every thousand cases. Even more important, we have records of several unnecessary deaths occurring in Canada in the last few years because young children contacted measles.

The minister has pointed out that the United States, on the other hand, in 1978 instituted a program to eliminate measles by the year 1982, and it has been rather successful. I just want to point out, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Miss Bégin) will be meeting with her provincial counterparts in the next six to seven weeks and we hope to be able to convince those provincial ministers to institute compulsory immunization programs. That is the only way we are going to eradicate measles in this country.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Order, please. The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at two o'clock p.m.

At 10.29 p.m. the House adjourned, without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.