

Supply—Defence Production

I am taking this opportunity to congratulate the minister on his quiet and orderly attitude towards these problems which have come to our attention lately. I am also happy to have him in such good mood. Perhaps he will not object too much to our finishing up the matter of steel before we go on to the matter of newsprint. Not very often do we find a member from an opposition party congratulating the administration or any member of the ministry on the way it handles problems. However, in connection with the administration of the supply of steel I understand the minister's difficulty, and I believe the minister realizes that I understand it.

But steel for motorcars is not half as important, to my mind, as steel for buildings of one kind or another that will not only house our people but will help build institutions of the kind required in the \$30 million program of the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Institutions of that kind will help restore health and strength to our community.

I am sure the minister who is in charge of the distribution of steel is in harmony and sympathy with the projects in the program of the Minister of National Health and Welfare, and I am sure he will see to it that steel is provided for those projects directly connected with the welfare of our Canadian people. Those institutions are necessary so that we may house and accommodate those thousands of people who, through no fault of their own, find they must go to them.

While I make this plea now, Mr. Chairman, I realize that it is granted even before I ask it. However, I do ask that the minister see to it that these institutions, many of which are voluntary, have sufficient steel. In this way hospitals which have been dreamed of may now become a reality through the minister's administration, and through the \$30 million program of the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

Let us develop this point one step further. Let us see that steel is made available for nurses' homes, which are so necessary if the nurses are to have accommodation in those hours when they may rest. In contrast to a use of this kind, I draw the attention of the committee to the use as exemplified in the building of motorcars. Let anyone take a look in Windsor or in Oshawa and he will see miles upon miles of new cars. Are they necessary, or are our nurses' homes necessary? Are they necessary, or are our hospitals necessary?

When we think of steel requirements our minds turn to those essential projects so necessary for the welfare of mankind, so that

there may be a sufficient number of hospital beds, proper accommodation for nurses, and other ancillary buildings. I would ask the Minister of Defence Production to think of his colleague with the \$30 million who is trying to do a job.

I know the minister, whose estimates are now under consideration, will see to it that priority is given to those human requirements which are so much more necessary than the miles and miles of new motorcars one sees lined up on the streets of cities throughout Canada, and particularly east of Oshawa for a distance of a mile and a half.

I do not know whether all those motorcars are necessary; perhaps a little walking, a little more exercise, would do us some good, rather than always to drive in motorcars. But I do know these hospital requirements are necessary, and I am sure I do not need to impress that fact upon the minister. He is a sensible kind of man, Mr. Chairman. He knows the circumstances, and he supports all of us who are interested in these humanitarian endeavours.

I am sure that in his administration first things will come first, and that these other things which you, sir, and I, as younger men, did not expect would come into existence in our day and generation, will not be considered so necessary. Indeed, one of these days we may find that our grandchildren will not need legs to walk around on, at all. We do not need all these automobiles; we do not need all this steel for the automobile industry; but we do need steel to build institutions so necessary for the welfare of our people, if they are to be cared for properly and in an orderly manner.

I have risen to speak at this time because I did not want steel to go by the board without first making some representations from one branch of our economy which is so necessary. After that will come the myriad of things connected with industry.

But let us have first things first. I thank the hon. member for permitting me to turn the discussion away from newsprint for a few moments. I am pleased to have this opportunity to place the facts before the minister, although I am sure he understands them. I urge that he permit his colleague to proceed with his \$30 million program, so that we may have a few more institutions to take care of our people, and so that we may have more nurses' homes, laundries and all those other buildings which are required in this modern age.

Mr. Howe: Mr. Chairman, the department is doing its best to take care of all steel requirements and, in doing so, is not overlooking the need for hospital accommodation.