

*Supply—Health and Welfare*

to other people in other occupations, who are trained in a similar fashion. It seems to me that when one considers the intensive training they have to undergo, the great restraints they must exercise and the things they have to do, we will have to devise some way of making their vocation more attractive. I am sure that we are virile enough to figure out ways and means of attracting more young people into what, in my judgment, is the greatest profession on the face of the earth.

The minister is to be commended for the good things he has done. We want to urge him along, with perhaps a few hatpin jabs just to keep him moving, and have him expand the program he has started upon. If in due course the studies of national health insurance plans indicate that it is possible under our federal system in Canada to have a scheme that will work, and that will be satisfactory to our people, then I am sure there will not be any difficulty either with me or my group.

**Mr. White (Middlesex East):** Mr. Chairman, first of all I wish to compliment the hon. member for Lanark, the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggart, and the hon. member for Peace River upon the very excellent representations they made this evening in the matter of national health. While I propose to make a few observations respecting national health plans, what I shall say will be more detailed and more local in nature.

I think I am safe in saying that the vast majority of Canadians feel that a national health insurance plan of some kind is long overdue. The move made recently by the premier of Ontario, in which he indicated that the province was prepared to enter such a plan, shows the thinking of the people of that province, and I have no doubt of other parts of Canada. So I am hopeful that before too long we will see introduced in the House of Commons a measure or measures which would go to implement one plan or another.

One of the speakers mentioned that health insurance had been kicked around since 1919. Another mentioned the price already being paid by Canadians for health insurance plans of one kind or another. Suffering from a cold, as I am tonight, I recommend to the department that some research be done in that connection. I heard the other day that years ago when one got a cold it lasted two weeks; but now, with all the new antibiotics and drugs of one kind and another, it lasts only a fortnight. Be that as it may, it is something on which some work can be done. I was glad to hear the minister say that the suggestion that has gone abroad that all ten provinces will have to come in and agree with

[Mr. Low.]

the federal government on a plan before it could be inaugurated is not true. I was glad to hear him deny that, because I have had it mentioned to me that during one of those television interviews with the press that was the impression left with the public and the press.

**Mr. Martin:** It was a different subject altogether.

**Mr. White (Middlesex East):** As I say, I was glad to hear the minister deny that. I would also point out that I agree with what the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggart said, namely that the part the federal government should play is that of aiding and bringing together the provinces and the municipalities, along with the federal department of health, but the details should be left with the provinces and the municipalities. I agree with that because the further the administration is away from the people the more costly it is and the more difficult it is to carry out. At best I am afraid it might be a conglomeration of a national health plan and provincial plans, of health schemes and insurance plans of one kind and another. With the help of the departments of health of the various provinces and the information the minister must have at hand after all these years, I have no doubt that a workable scheme can be arrived at.

I now want to take a moment or two to deal with the question of the rebate of sales tax to hospitals. I am interested in this particularly because of the fact that in London, Ontario, we have a number of hospitals, and I am going to give the names. I see the minister fidgeting.

**Mr. Martin:** This is a matter that really does not come within the jurisdiction of the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

**Mr. White (Middlesex East):** I have a letter from the minister's department about it.

**Mr. Martin:** I have no authority in the matter.

**Mr. White (Middlesex East):** So far as I have been able to ascertain these are the hospitals in the county of Middlesex that are in receipt of a rebate or are sales tax free on supplies that are purchased: Strathroy General hospital; Beck Memorial sanatorium; Parkwood hospital for incurables; Ontario hospital (provincial); St. Joseph's hospital; St. Mary's hospital; Victoria hospital; Western Counties veterans lodge; Westminster hospital. The Middlesex County home and the Dr. John Dearnness home for elder citizens pay their tax but get a refund. Therefore, outside of private hospitals, the only hospital