

Supply—Health and Welfare

discussed at the dominion-provincial conference of welfare ministers a couple of months ago, and I understand it is likely to be a matter of discussion if not for a future dominion conference of premiers at least for the conference of welfare ministers which will be reconvened later this fall. I think the hon. member for Perth is aware, as I am, from newspaper reports that this was a matter for discussion among the premiers when they met at Banff a month or two ago.

At the conference of welfare ministers which I called and attended a month or so ago, a great variety of views were expressed. I do not know what position will be taken by Saskatchewan or any other province at the time of the next meeting, but I shall undertake to report to the House of Commons if there is any conclusion drawn as a result of those discussions.

Some questions were also asked by the hon. member for Perth about cost sharing arrangements with the provinces and the letters dealing with contracting out, which the Prime Minister tabled yesterday. I am sure the hon. member has now had an opportunity to read those letters in yesterday's *Hansard* and to hear the Prime Minister's answers earlier today during the question period, when he said this legislation will be forthcoming very soon. At that stage he will be able to question the matter at greater length.

I was grateful for the intervention by the hon. member for Carleton who, in the house, has shown a continuing interest in the department in which he worked for such a long period of time. I note with interest his remarks about the health grants and welfare grants, and his disinclination to see a change effected by contracting out.

Last night an hon. member suggested that family and youth allowances should be paid together. I thought I made this matter clear when the youth allowance legislation was passed in July. However, I should like to point out first that there is a considerable difference in approach as between the two pieces of legislation and there would be a considerable administrative difficulty; for, as is known, family allowance cheques are paid each month. This will not be the case with youth allowance cheques, particularly during the summer months, because July and August amounts will be paid in September when it is ascertained that a student has returned to school. It will be seen that there would be numerous adjustments back and forth if these were coupled in one cheque; therefore it is not anticipated that they will be paid in one

[Miss LaMarsh.]

cheque. I may say, if anyone is concerned that this would cause an increase in the number of employees in my department, that the family allowances division is responsible for these allowances and their payment. The number of individuals we have had to add to the staff to deal with these allowances is fewer than the number we would have been obliged to add were we paying the allowances in one cheque. This is because of the necessity of making adjustments in September of each year.

Mr. Slogan: What happens when a term begins, say, in the middle of a month? Do they receive \$10 for that month, or is a *pro rata* payment made?

Miss LaMarsh: They get the whole amount.

Mr. Slogan: Are these cheques sent to the parents?

Miss LaMarsh: To the parents. I have forgotten the date. I am not sure whether the hon. member for Springfield was here when this was discussed in committee in the house. There was a lively discussion at that time and many questions were dealt with. I would ask the hon. member to look at *Hansard* for that day. A great many questions dealing with the regulations were answered at that time, and I believe they will prove more useful in answering questions from correspondents and constituents than is normally the case.

During this discussion there has been a continuing refrain asking the government to spend more money. A number of hon. members have recommended that more money should be spent on family allowances, old age security, research of various kinds including medical research, fitness facilities and so on. As almost every item was dealt with in a general way, requests were made that more money should be spent. I should be happy to meet these requests, but last evening, while I was sitting here, I tried to figure out what sum of money would be required to meet the requests which have been made up to that point and I confess I was not able to come up with anything I would feel justified in placing before the Minister of Finance, particularly in one year. I would point out that there has already been a large increase in the estimates of this department.

Mr. Willoughby: I feel—and I thought I made this clear last night—that to spend money in the direction I indicated would be a form of economy. Increased expenditures on research would encourage more