

## 2. The National Health Grants

These eight grants broadly cover the entire field of public health. In the first year, they will total as much as \$17,000,000, but they will later rise to approximately \$22,000,000, and continue indefinitely at that rate.

## 3. Grants for Hospital Construction

These Federal grants of \$13,000,000 a year will act as a powerful incentive to hospital building. At the end of five years, the provincial needs will again be surveyed, and it is expected that the grants will continue for a further period of five years, probably at the rate of \$6,500,000 a year.

In my years as a Member of Parliament and a Member of the Government, no event has given me as much encouragement as the fact that the National Health Programme is coming into effect in my period of service as Minister of National Health and Welfare. My colleagues in the Government and myself are proud indeed to be associated with the Prime Minister in the approval and the implementation of this programme that has inherent in it such tremendous possibilities for the health and well-being of all our fellow citizens.

Here I should like to pay tribute to all who have pioneered in the advocacy of these measures: to my predecessors in Federal health work; to the health authorities of the Provincial Governments, who have always cooperated so closely with us; to national health organizations who have pressed for these plans; and to the members of all parties in Parliament who, in House and Senate Committees, have given such close attention to Canada's health problems.

I know that many of you in this audience have also played your full part in forwarding these programmes and all of you have helped create in Canada that informed public opinion which has become conscious of our health deficiencies and insistent on their correction.

The culmination of all the close studies of the Canadian health scene initiated by the Dominion Government was the National Health Programme that was included in the Dominion Proposals to the Provinces in August 1945. The present action of the Government covers and goes beyond all of the four-point programme previously set forward, except for the National Health Insurance scheme, for which all that is being done constitutes the essential first stages in the development of a comprehensive national plan. When the present programme is well under way, it will then be possible to proceed with the implementation of a national plan for hospital and medical care insurance.

It is clear, then, that the plan announced by the Prime Minister has a double purpose: (1) It represents an immediate attack directed at strategic points in the Canadian Health Programme; (2) It prepares the way for Health Insurance by putting into effect those steps that are the essential prerequisites to any adequate national plan.

Money is no measure of the effectiveness of health services, but some indication of the magnitude of the National Health Programme can be gathered from the fact that in its early stages - apart from health services for veterans - it will increase the total spent on health by the governments in Canada by 30%. It represents almost half of what the Provinces are now spending, and almost twice municipal health expenditures.

In its first full year of operation, this programme will total more than \$30,000,000, more than four times what the Federal Government