

*Supply—External Affairs*

there are set out four requirements which I will not bother to read:

(v) provide assurance, where the refugee suffers from illness which will require treatment in Canada, that he will receive the medical care he needs. When the illness is such that institutional care is necessary, the approval of the provincial health authorities must be obtained before the refugee can be permitted to come to Canada.

The brochure then lists certain conditions that must be fulfilled by the refugee. He must be of good character and so forth.

It goes on to say:

The Canadian government does not set a limit to the period or to the extent of the responsibility assumed by the sponsors. Relief of indigent residents of Canada is normally the responsibility of the municipalities and the provinces. A sponsored immigrant who finds himself in need of assistance is a burden on the municipality or the province if his sponsor fails to live up to the guarantees he gave when applying for the immigrant's admission. This will explain that the Canadian government should insist that sponsors of immigrants, including refugees, accept full responsibility for the persons brought to Canada under their sponsorship until they become eligible for normal municipal or provincial social and welfare benefits. Sponsors who may wish to ascertain the extent of their responsibility and the nature of the welfare assistance available from municipal or provincial authorities, which vary from province to province, are requested to get in touch with these authorities for further information. Sponsors may also wish to take advantage of hospital insurance plans in respect of the refugees whom they have sponsored.

As the representations which were made to the Prime Minister the other day by the welfare council, and which the Prime Minister put on *Hansard* on March 3, clearly show, the welfare council and others interested have found that this requirement is one that is in fact in practice a bar to any effective action. It has proved to be up till now and in my opinion it will continue to be a complete bar. I know it is not intended to be. I am not for a minute suggesting that the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration or the government as a whole put this requirement in deliberately to make the sponsorship unworkable, but that has been the effect of it.

Not only has it been the effect, but it is precisely what I told the Secretary of State for External Affairs in the last session of parliament would be the effect. I had some experience in administering the Hungarian refugee movement and I know that it is almost impossible for the federal government to negotiate with provincial and municipal authorities about this particular matter with any finality or with any satisfaction, and it is quite impossible for private sponsors to do it. I am sure that is why the welfare council made the recommendation it did. It was that the federal government, in consultation with the provinces, arrange as expeditiously as possible for the acceptance of

public responsibility for established public health and welfare services for privately sponsored refugee families admitted under the government's program for private sponsorship during the world refugee year.

When the Prime Minister announced on the seventeenth of March the decisions that the government had already reached with respect to these representations he said that they had agreed with some of them, and I am sure that there was a good deal of satisfaction taken over that. The first of their recommendations and, far and away, sir, the most important of them, the Prime Minister said he was not able to deal with at that time because a decision had not been reached about it. Now, here is my suggestion. I do not agree entirely with the recommendation of the welfare council and I am going beyond what they suggested. If we really mean business at all about this world refugee year and about private sponsorship—personally I should like to see more private sponsorship and that is what I am urging, more private sponsorship and more ease for private sponsorship instead of any large addition to the direct government movement—I am quite convinced that this problem can be very easily solved if the government will do, with respect to these privately sponsored refugees, precisely what was done in the case of the Hungarian refugees.

The federal government should undertake the residual responsibility of health care after a certain period for those refugees who are admitted and who are going to be selected by the United Nations commissioner for refugees. I think it is quite reasonable to expect that the sponsors should look after them for a year. It seems to me, sir, that should be done instead of trying to leave the sponsors with an open-ended commitment which many of those voluntary organizations cannot in conscience undertake because they cannot be sure that two years hence they may have the same officers or the same personnel or, in fact, that they will be in a position to carry it out. Most of them are composed of people who take their responsibilities and regard their word seriously, and would not want to subscribe their names to something that was not going to be carried out.

It seems to me, sir, that this is not suggesting any very great burden on the treasury. I am going to give two reasons for this view. The first is the one that was given the other day by the Prime Minister or by the Secretary of State for External Affairs; I forget which one of them it was that told us how much less costly and how much more encouraging this movement of the 100 families was than it was expected to be,