

national problem. I shall not take time to discuss peace-time aspects of it, but would ask the minister whether his department has been used by the newly-organized war-time housing corporation in this particular field of engineering.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): Only so far as the author of that pamphlet is on an advisory committee which I believe gives advice and assistance to those in charge of the war-time housing programme.

Mr. NICHOLSON: I understood that the services of this department had not been used by war-time housing. I know there are other engineers in Canada who are quite capable of doing the work which has been done by this department, but I submit that at this time when every individual should be doing necessary work we should not have overlapping, we should not have new engineers assigned to do work that has already been done by this department. I suggest that the minister draw the attention of war-time housing to the fact that he has a department with a staff and with information that should be of value to war-time housing in the work they are undertaking. Would it be considered presumptuous on the part of the minister to do that?

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): I shall be very glad to draw it to their attention. Our function is purely advisory; when we are called in for consultation. Not only in regard to this particular project but in regard also to munitions projects generally, we advise and send our men there for inspection to see that health conditions are being observed. This feature of the work I believe is functioning very successfully.

Mr. NICHOLSON: But war-time housing are now engaged in housing projects in a number of places in Canada; they should not wait until they are half through before consulting this department.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): If they do not come to us we will go to them.

Mr. BLACKMORE: At the outset may I also congratulate the hon. member for Edmonton East (Mrs. Casselman) on the fact that her first speech here was delivered in the interests of the suffering, among whom unfortunately women and children in this country form a large number. We have neglected our health problem in Canada far too much in the past; we are paying a fearful price right now for our neglect, and I am afraid we have only just begun to pay.

[Mr. Nicholson.]

I wish to mention four or five matters which in my opinion should be constantly in the minds of those who are administering our affairs in Ottawa with respect to health. First, I do not believe that the education which our children and people generally receive is adequate to teach them the fundamental principles of health. Of course some may say at once that this is a provincial matter. In Canada virtually all our considerations are affected more or less by the division of responsibilities between the provinces and the dominion. But it must be borne in mind that provincial revenues are definitely limited, and the invasion which is now taking place of the provincial income and corporation tax fields by the dominion will tend to make the matter worse. The result is that if anyone is to take up the slack in the matter of health the dominion government must do it. If, therefore, education for health purposes is not adequate, it must become the concern of this government.

I believe that every year there ought to be a physical examination of every child in our schools at least. I have had a good many years of experience as a teacher and principal in our schools; my life has been largely devoted to the youth of Canada; my heart is drawn to them, and one of the main reasons for my being here is my great interest in the young people growing up in this country. There should be a physical examination every year, if not of those over eighteen years of age certainly of those under eighteen. Obviously many of the parents cannot all provide for such an examination, so that someone must absorb the cost.

I believe there are a great many operations which ought to be performed. The provinces are struggling to take care of this problem; to see that adenoids and tonsils are removed, that tuberculosis is cared for when it develops, that victims of infantile paralysis are reconditioned, and that all serious accidents are looked after. But unquestionably the resources of the provinces are limited.

At the risk of incurring your displeasure, Mr. Chairman, and being called out of order, I should like to refer briefly to the little altercation that developed the other day between myself and the leader of the opposition. The hon. gentleman was insisting that we should see that our contractual obligations were taken care of. I believe that the health of the community, and other similar matters, ought to be taken care of at least to a very great extent, even if as a result we are not able to take care of our contractual obligations. I am not willing to neglect those obligations, but neither am I willing to neglect the sacred