

## Questions

Name of purchaser	Quantity	Unit price
Main Wheels		
Sair's Tire Exchange, Winnipeg, Man. ....	36	7 50
Prencu Engineering, Toronto, Ontario .....	529	7 50
Fefferman Hide and Fur Company, Limited, Leth- bridge, Alta. ....	201	7 50

The variance of prices for tires and tubes is due to difference in size and condition.

3. March 19, 1945, is the last date at which aircraft stores at Estevan have been dismantled.

## \*RHEUMATIC DISEASES — RESEARCH

Mr. BENTLEY:

1. Does the government carry on constant and extensive research and experimentation with a view to finding a cure or cures for the various rheumatic diseases, particularly arthritis?

2. If not, does the government make financial contributions to voluntary medical or other organizations devoted to such work?

3. To what organizations and in what amounts?

4. What is the government doing, specifically, to (a) find ways of eradicating arthritis; (b) assist others to find ways; (c) to help people who suffer from arthritis?

Mr. CLAXTON: Mr. Speaker, since many hon. members are receiving and sending me form letters urging the government to make a contribution to the Canadian Rheumatic Diseases Association, it might be of interest if I answer the questions orally and make a brief statement on this subject.

The answers to questions 1 and 2 are in the negative, and the answer to question 3 follows from the answer to question 2.

Question 4 is covered below.

As hon. members know, matters of health and welfare are primarily the concern of the provinces, and it is considered that research into medical conditions in Canada can best be conducted by hospitals and other institutions actively operating in these fields.

The national research council through its associate committee on medical research does, however, make grants-in-aid for the promotion of medical research. Projects approved by the committee must be carried out under competent direction in universities or hospitals and medical schools where adequate facilities for such studies are available.

When the associate committee on medical research of the national research council was set up in 1938, rheumatism and arthritis were recognized as being among the diseases to be studied. Due to the intervention of the war active steps could not be taken in these fields.

The committee is, however, prepared to [Mr. McIlraith.]

give consideration to applications for assistance in any project that gives promise of adding to knowledge regarding the cause, methods of prevention or treatment of arthritis in the same way it does to other medical research projects. No such application is pending at the present time.

With regard to the question of financial contributions to voluntary organizations, I should say that in November, 1945, the Department of National Health and Welfare asked the Dominion Council of Health for advice as to whether or not a grant should be made to the Canadian Rheumatic Diseases Association. The Dominion Council of Health consists of the deputy ministers of health of the dominion and provincial governments and others, and its purpose is to advise the dominion government on health matters. The council found that the association's activities had been largely suspended during the war and that the association had not yet established a programme of activities or secured sufficiently wide support to justify a grant at that time.

As part of its programme of health and social security measures, the dominion government's proposals to the dominion-provincial conference include assistance for complete medical, hospital and nursing service which, if carried out, would provide for the active treatment of rheumatism and arthritis.

Mr. GRAYDON: May I ask the minister if he has offhand the information as to the number of sufferers from arthritis in the dominion? I heard within the last week that the number was very high.

Mr. CLAXTON: I think some of the representations which have been circulated to hon. members suggest that the total number of people who have been crippled from arthritis or rheumatism totals 600,000. My information is that the figure is not anything like that. There may be 600,000 people who suffer in some degree or other from arthritis and rheumatism, the number of people who are actually crippled is very much less than that. When a motion concerning arthritis, which is on the order paper comes before the house I shall be glad to give full information on it.

Mr. COLDWELL: May consideration not be given to establishing a research medical division which would look into all these chronic diseases? There are many persons suffering from them in Canada; and it seems to me that isolated provinces trying to do this work are not nearly as effective as one central organization dealing with all these chronic diseases, including sclerosis.