

connected with the administration of this act dealing with individuals—not all the individuals in a community but the major part of those who are wage earners. They therefore have first hand information with respect to the health of the workmen, questions of sanitation, and the surroundings of the individuals insured, under the inspection clause referred to this afternoon. If that can be correlated to the activities of the provincial health authorities I believe it would be a great step forward, and ensure to a large extent the attainment of the object which we have in mind. For instance it is well known that on this continent the first efforts made by private enterprise to assist the state authorities in connection with health was by life insurance companies which inserted in their policies a provision to enable them to inspect the homes of those who were insured, and see to their surroundings and provide if possible for improved health conditions. The result has been most remarkable. The co-ordination of these organizations with the governmental authorities has had most far-reaching and beneficial consequences. That is what is intended here.

Mr. LAPOINTE: Health is largely a provincial matter, I agree. When the federal Department of Health was created the act said that it was for the purpose of looking after the federal activities—

Mr. BENNETT: Propaganda largely.

Mr. LAPOINTE: —in quarantine and such matters, and to cooperate with the provinces. As far as cooperating with the provinces is concerned this part of the present bill is not needed. The present Department of Health Act is sufficient to authorize any investigation of the kind suggested by this provision. But if the right hon. gentleman is correct as to the jurisdiction of this parliament in respect to unemployment insurance, the same view would apply to matters of health. Take the preamble of this bill. If the Prime Minister is right when he says:

Whereas the Dominion of Canada was a signatory, as part of the British Empire, to the treaty of peace—

—and that is where he takes his power—

—and by article 427 of the said treaty declared that the well-being, physical, moral and intellectual, of industrial wage-earners is of supreme international importance—

—if that applies to a scheme of unemployment insurance surely it would apply as well to a scheme of health insurance. But it does not apply to either.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): I wish to endorse every word my hon. friend from Quebec East (Mr. Lapointe) has said. But I wish to discuss part IV of the bill from another angle. To my mind it is the most useless part of this bill. The powers would be equally strong if sections 39, 40 and 41 were not in the bill. We have here the powers given to the commission in the matter of national health—nothing but a glorified post office and secretarial bureau looking to consultation with provincial health authorities concerning health insurance in Canada. What is there in these sections that actually advances or promotes the cause of national health in Canada? Nothing. The Prime Minister knows as well as I do that certain provinces have at the present time well considered schemes of health insurance actually prepared for most comprehensive investigation. As to the duties and powers to be exercised by the commission through co-operation with the Dominion Council of Health and the various provinces, surely one would expect that to happen automatically. The commission is going to carry on this unemployment insurance scheme and in the main the provinces are charged with the administration of health, with the exceptions mentioned by my hon. friend from Quebec East.

Then section 40 states that it shall be the duty of the commission to collect information and data. I would suggest to my right hon. friend that in my own province we have been collecting information and data from every country in the world for the last two and a half years. We have all the necessary information and data now; we have legislation drafted as the result of a most comprehensive investigation. I really resent this section, because it is nothing but eyewash, the whole part IV of this bill. Here this commission are going to be set up, but they are not being instructed to proceed by way of cooperation with the various provincial health authorities in order to develop a real system of national medicine and health. The objectives of the commission are to become a post office, a secretarial bureau, to cooperate with the existing authorities and then to analyze and make available to any province, corporation or group of persons interested the information collected. It is not now a matter of not having the information; it is a matter of not being able to act upon the information at our disposal, largely through lack of financial resources. This is not what we were led to expect by the tremendous protestations of the Prime Minister in that first fine fervour