

of course, is the proper aim for a well integrated social security system, as we hope and believe the Canadian system will be.

We hope, as I have already said, that at these forthcoming meetings we will be able to achieve a broad measure of agreement between the federal and provincial authorities on this Canada assistance plan. In that case, legislation will be introduced at this session of parliament, so that the plan can have effect at the start of the new fiscal year, 12 months from now.

I have outlined in some detail this Canada assistance plan not only because of the meetings which will take place this week, but because of the great interest hon. members have already shown in this matter. It is of great importance in the social welfare programs, and I would remind you that it is one of five measures which are being developed as the first phase of the general program for combatting poverty and improving opportunities. This first phase is, of course, no more than a first phase. A great many other measures will require to be taken under this comprehensive program. They will be taken step by step after co-ordinated preparation and after appropriate consultation with the provinces.

Perhaps I might return for a moment, Mr. Speaker, to medicare. The speech from the throne, and this paragraph has disappointed one or two of my hon. friends, makes clear this government's commitment to the principle that health services should be available comprehensively, irrespective of the financial position of the person needing care. This is a principle of public policy. Its implementation in our confederation involves both federal and provincial governments. There are, therefore, three main questions which arise and which have to be solved. One is the scale and quality of the services to be provided. The second is the timetable on which they can be made available. The third concerns the respective roles of federal and provincial governments and, intimately related to that, the form in which the services are to be organized and paid for.

We recognize that, under our constitution, the main responsibility for the organization of health services lies with the provinces. The federal government, therefore, is informing itself as fully as possible of all the views and approaches to this matter that have been developed in the various provinces. On that basis we will be ready for full discussion at the federal-provincial conference which we had hoped to have before the end of April

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but which will not now be possible until toward the end of May.

There are, however, certain aspects of the general problems of health care for which the federal government has direct responsibility, and one of the most important of these concerns the quality and availability of drugs and the prices that have to be paid for them. The speech from the throne indicates that the government will set up a special committee to go into this matter, the work of which committee will be facilitated by the government, with a view to arriving at proposals as to how the prices paid by the public can be reduced.

Mr. Speaker, may I call it six o'clock.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT  
MOTION**

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE  
DEBATED UNDER ADJOURNMENT  
MOTION

**Mr. Speaker:** It is my duty, pursuant to provisional standing order 39A, to inform the house that the questions to be raised at ten o'clock this evening are the following: the hon. member for York-Humber (Mr. Cowan), Canadian National Railways—Toronto—lease of unused spur line for parking purposes; the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen), Administration of Justice—ministers subpoenaed to appear in Quebec Superior Court action.

It being six o'clock I do now leave the Chair.

At six o'clock the house took recess.

**AFTER RECESS**

The house resumed at 8 p.m.

**SPEECH FROM THE THRONE**

CONTINUATION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN  
REPLY

The house resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Cashin for an address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to his speech at the opening of the session, and the amendment thereto of Mr. Diefenbaker.

**Mr. Pearson:** Mr. Speaker, this afternoon in dealing with the speech from the throne, that fruitcake as the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition was good enough to call it, I was particularly concerned with explaining the economic and social welfare proposals of