

In the past two decades, especially, to supplement long-established municipal and provincial welfare measures and those of voluntary organizations, the Canadian Government has set aside an increasing share of the nation's resources for the people's well-being. Canada's total expenditures on health and welfare now approach \$1,000,000,000 a year -- \$11,000,000,000 or more in United States terms.

In our two countries, record levels of prosperity and economic security have made possible -- and imperative -- record levels of public health activity. The vast cost to a nation of ill-health and disease justifies a comparable investment of the nation's wealth.

Towards the end of the war, in surveying the health scene in Canada, we found that we were one of the healthiest peoples in the world -- thanks to the initiative and devoted service of municipal, provincial and federal health departments, voluntary health agencies, the Canadian doctor, dentist, nurse -- all our health workers -- but we also found some health statistics that gave us little cause for pride.

We resolved to do something about this.

Since further advances would overtax provincial health budgets -- already increased six-fold during the past 20 years -- we decided to use federal monies to supplement municipal and provincial health activities, and to help equalize health opportunity across Canada -- and for all Canadians.

Because we felt that this was a time for massive advances, the Government last year inaugurated Canada's National Health Programme, under which \$165,000,000 is provided in the first five years to further provincial plans for health surveys, increased hospital accommodation and expanded health activities.

In assessing the job to be done in Canada, we set aside under our Programme more than twice as much per capita as that provided under the admirable health grants system in the United States.

### 3. CANADA'S PROGRESS IN PUBLIC HEALTH

This entry of the Canadian Government into the health field is of major importance, since our federal health action had previously been limited to such traditional services as those connected with sick mariners, quarantine, immigration, narcotics control, Indian Health, and food and drug supervision -- apart from everything done indirectly for health through welfare measures.

Already, in little over a year of full operation of our national programme, we can see a striking expansion of public health activity in every Canadian province. We now hope to raise health care in Canada to heights hitherto undreamed of. Everywhere there is a ferment of new ideas, new developments, new enthusiasm. Let me note a few highlights of the past year:

No fewer than 1,400 public health projects have been made possible by these grants.

Substantial aid has been given to the construction of badly-needed hospitals with more than 15,000 beds.

The number of public health workers has risen by 1,500 -- and 1,200 have been enabled to take additional training.

Rural health care is being brought closer to the level of that in urban areas.