

of finding a cure for this disease. I do not agree with the hon. member for Renfrew South (Mr. McCann). I know there are two schools of thought on this subject. There are those old die-hard medical practitioners—thank goodness they are not all that way—who put their whole faith in surgery and X-ray treatment. If that matter were gone into thoroughly I am quite sure that statistics could be brought down to prove that this method has not been very successful. To me the information given this afternoon by the hon. member for Portage la Prairie was convincing, and more than ample to warrant the government in making further investigations.

While I am on that point I should like to say that there are several treatments for cancer. I am not a medical man, but from my general knowledge of the subject I believe that several treatments have been effective, and they do not include surgery and X-ray. I do not know of one case that has been completely cured by surgery, but I do know of a number of cases which have been cured by other means. A year ago when I was in Calgary I was met by a committee in the Palliser hotel. They were much concerned over this question of the treatment for cancer. If I remember rightly the committee consisted of about twenty to twenty-five persons. Nearly all had suffered from cancer; one or two had goitre as well. In each case the doctors had recommended surgery, even for those who had goitre. I vividly recall one case in particular; that person was given no more than two months to live. Each of these people told me he had been cured, though not by the treatment mentioned to-day by the hon. member for Portage la Prairie. In these cases the treatment had been administered by Doctor Arnott, who lives in Ontario. Doctor Arnott has been to this government and to the research council seeking assistance to extend his treatment, but he met with exactly the same consideration which was shown Doctor Davidson, and which was mentioned this afternoon by the hon. member for Portage la Prairie. I do not think that is right, or conducive to the best health treatment of our people. We might find some who are quacks; I have not the slightest doubt about that. But if we investigate 100 cases which are unworthy, we may find that the 101st case might be well worth any expense involved.

Nor am I one who believes that all our health services can be handled efficiently by medical doctors. In this new department I believe it would be a mistake if we excluded

all but medical doctors. I recall that the social security committee, which dealt with the subject of health, heard a gentleman named Doctor Davidson, I believe it was.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): Yes; president of the child welfare council.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): Yes. He was not a medical doctor, but I venture to say that he had more knowledge respecting the general health of the people than did ninety-nine per cent of the medical doctors, and he gave a most excellent presentation to the committee, one which was most beneficial to all concerned. Men like that are worthy of consideration. If the minister who is to be in charge of this department can get the services of such men, regardless of whether they are medical doctors or not, then I believe the department will be well worth while.

Mention was made this afternoon by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) about calling a conference of the provinces. There may be some urgent need for such a conference, and I think it would be a good thing. There has already been a conference of ministers and deputy ministers of health from the provinces, who have met in Ottawa within the past two weeks the health officials of the dominion department. This government will not meet any opposition from the provinces, when it comes to a matter of health. In almost every case when health authorities have come to meet dominion officials, it has been the desire of those authorities to go to the full length of instituting health measures. The only thing that has stood in the way has been the financial question. They wanted to extend health services, but invariably they were met with the protest, "We cannot afford it; we have not the money; the dominion government will have to supply it." That, too, is a question which will come before the new department; it cannot be avoided. The same will apply to the new Department of Reconstruction, set up only a few days ago. One of the major questions will be: Where are you to get the money? This government, if it is to give the degree of welfare which will be required in this country, will have to solve that problem.

I agree that family allowances are a step in the right direction, but I do not agree at all with the way in which they are to be administered. However, that is another question, which can be dealt with at the proper time. One of the best ways to improve health is to prevent sickness, rather than to try to build up the health of the individual after sickness has broken it down.