

in the two months following that speech these sanatoriums had great difficulty in admitting the number of patients who clamoured for treatment. Therefore it is evident, from a study of the course of the disease in the last quarter century, that the time is fast approaching when a full and concerted effort on the part of all concerned would reduce tuberculosis from the terrifying position given to it by Sir William Osler as one of the "captains of the men of death" to an insignificant place in the mortality tables of the dominion.

At six o'clock the house took recess.

After Recess

The house resumed at eight o'clock.

Mr. JOSEPH NEEDHAM (The Battlefords): Mr. Speaker, may I first place on record the resolution under discussion:

That, in the opinion of this house, it is most urgent that state medicine be established in the Dominion of Canada.

The resolution is very broad. It does not indicate how state medicine should be established, or whose direct responsibility this duty would be. All hon. members are aware that the provinces have a large share in the control of the health of our people. We also recognize that there is a federal department of health. I take it the resolution contemplates cooperation between the provinces and the dominion in the establishment of a system of state medicine. Just how far the authority of these respective governments should extend is perhaps one of the points which will have to be settled. We know, however, that each is or should be directly concerned with the health of the people.

Perhaps the state should have the first concern, because the state must realize, perhaps more directly than do the provinces, the value of citizens. In a time of war the federal state has a claim on every citizen and should have the first responsibility of seeing that every citizen is kept in the best possible health. All hon. members realize that while a healthy person is an asset to a state, a sickly person is a liability.

Then we may analyze the question from another angle. The federal state is directly concerned with matters of war and armament. We might ask ourselves this question: What is the use of providing defence unless we have healthy citizens to use the defence equipment? I say it would be far better to spend less money on armaments and more on the health of the population, even though

[Mr. Ross (Middlesex).]

such health expenditures be considered from the standpoint of war preparation. It should be of at least equal, or possibly of greater concern to have healthy people than to have armaments.

From the evidence brought forward this afternoon it seems clear that those countries most progressive in the construction of armaments are the countries giving the greatest attention to the health of their people. This is not a political issue, nor is it a claim whereby one class may benefit more than another. The benefits derived would be for the good of the whole dominion. If such a scheme could be worked out, I feel we would go a long way towards creating a happy and contented people, because it is impossible to enjoy life while in a state of imperfect health.

May I make particular reference to some of the arguments adduced this afternoon by the hon. member for Humboldt (Mr. Fleming). I clearly recall that the same arguments were advanced when state medicine was proposed in Great Britain, and I believe they have been advanced in every country where the subject has been discussed. I believe his argument that everybody with a sore finger or a sore toe would run to a hospital, if medicine and hospitalization were free, is not well founded.

I recall that in 1917 and 1918 the municipality of Round Valley granted free hospital accommodation to its citizens. Two years after the system was inaugurated a new council rescinded the provision. I was secretary during the period, and I know that fewer patients from the municipality went to the hospital during the two years hospitalization was free than during the time the people had to foot their own bills. If necessary, I could produce proof of my statement.

I shall not take time to place statistics on record, because I believe sufficient were advanced this afternoon. We did hear, however, that each year \$311,000,000 is spent in treatment of disease while only \$7,000,000 is spent for preventive purposes. I find that in Ontario, \$54,846,349 was spent on sickness in one year, and \$834,502 was spent on public health. It would seem safe to say that there is room for investigation in connection with preventive medicine, and to ascertain whether or not sickness cannot be arrested in the early stages. On many occasions persons may have to pay \$300, where \$30 should have been sufficient to prevent the illness.

For these reasons I say we should have a health program for the whole dominion worked out cooperatively between the provinces and the dominion. We often hear it said that human life is the most valuable