

The Budget—Mr. Dufresne

wants me to take in one case, even though I think it is a bit high, and here they are. So far as payments to the provinces in return for the rental of certain tax fields are concerned, the implementation is about 77 per cent. In the field of old age pensions, the implementation is at best 66½ per cent. In the field of health, in terms of constant dollars, the implementation is 10 per cent. In the field of federal responsibility for the employable unemployed, the implementation is zero per cent. In the field of timing grants for the development of the country and for public works to avoid unemployment, the implementation according to the minister himself is zero per cent. Now, how he adds up 77 per cent, 66½ per cent, 10 per cent, zero per cent and zero per cent and arrives at two-thirds is an arithmetical computation which, as the hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Macdonnell) would say, only a philosopher could achieve. Actually, it is a very meagre showing.

So, Mr. Speaker, what we had yesterday was a wonderful debate. Nobody went to sleep, and we all enjoyed it from start to finish. But in the end, all it amounted to was an attempt on the part of the Leader of the Opposition to justify whatever stand it was he took at the conference in 1945, and an attempt on the part of the Minister of National Health and Welfare to tell us that the government had implemented its proposals to the extent of two-thirds when, as I have just demonstrated, such is not the case. However, yesterday's debate did have this advantageous result. It did force the Minister of National Health and Welfare to discuss these five subjects and bring them out in the open. I submit they are five of the most important subjects facing the people of Canada at the present time. What I call for, even if it means we have to have another speech from the Leader of the Opposition and another speech from the Minister of National Health and Welfare, is a clear statement by spokesmen for the older parties in this house on these important issues.

So far as we are concerned, we feel that federal-provincial taxation agreements should be worked out; that they should be on a basis that will provide for unity in this country; that they should be on a basis that will make possible the redistribution of the wealth of this country, so that it will get to Canadians in proportion to the extent to which they produce it and in proportion to their rights as Canadians from one end of Canada to the other to a decent standard of living. In the field of old age pensions, and pensions for the blind, we feel that the amount should be increased to not less than

\$60 per month. This and other improvements in our old age legislation should be made right away.

In the field of health we contend that here is one of the most important domestic issues facing our people, and that a nationwide program of health insurance must not be delayed any longer than October of this year when the federal-provincial conference is held. I call upon the leaders in all parties to make it clear where they stand on this issue. I call upon the Prime Minister not to remain satisfied with the statement he made in the election campaign of 1953. At that time he seemed to rely on the fact that there were only one or two provinces that seemed to be asking for a health insurance program. The picture has changed since then. The picture was changed somewhat last week. We know from what happened in public that four or five of the provinces are now interested in a health insurance program. If we knew what went on behind closed doors on Wednesday of last week, it might turn out that many more than five are interested in a program of this kind. I call upon the Prime Minister and the Minister of National Health and Welfare to have done with this business of reading us statements about the past. Liberal lore is full of them, right back to 1919. What we want to know is where the Liberal party stands on health insurance today.

In the field of unemployment we feel that, until such time as steps are taken to bring about full employment, it is still true, as was stated by the Liberals in 1945, that full responsibility for the employable unemployed should be taken by the federal government. In the field of what was referred to yesterday by the Minister of National Health and Welfare as public investment timing grants, we feel that it is the responsibility of the federal government to launch public works on a vast scale for the development of this country, for the elimination of unemployment, and for economic progress so that we might have a nation in which there is well-being and abundance for all our people.

I have tried to do what I suggest the two major spokesmen failed to do yesterday. They talked about the past. They tried to justify their respective positions. They did not tell us where we go from here on the important issues to which they referred. I have stated where we stand on these five major issues, and I believe the people of Canada have a right to know where the other parties in this house stand on these same important issues.

(Translation):

Mr. J. Wilfrid Dufresne (Quebec West): Mr. Speaker, on April 5 last, the new Min-