

yet here we are in a progressive country like Canada dragging along twenty years behind the old country. It is time we kicked out of it and did something worthy of a progressive country.

Mr. BENNETT: Strong language, Mr. Chairman, from a great many hon. gentlemen opposite.

Miss MACPHAIL: Not gentlemen only.

Mr. BENNETT: If there were any exaggeration in this house I am sure the hon. member for Southeast Grey would be associated with it; there is no doubt about that at all—anything either strong or abusive. It is amazingly strange, now that we are aiming to promote a national health policy, that it should thus be assailed. I ask this chamber two questions. I ask hon. gentlemen first to point to any line in any statute of this country that undertakes to deal with national health. That is number one. Number two: Is it possible under existing conditions, with machinery set up in the provinces and municipalities, to deal with the matter on that basis until such time as by the operation of this act arrangements can be made to deal with it?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Does not the Department of National Health deal with some of these problems?

Mr. BENNETT: It does not touch that at all. There are two questions to which attention might be directed. It has been suggested that the Department of National Health may deal with these problems, but the Department of National Health does not deal with them at all. If one will take the trouble to turn up the statute it will be seen that the department is given large powers but they are not powers of action with respect to the provinces. Let us see what we are aiming at. We are aiming at a national health policy. Hon. members who are medical men have pointed that out as desirable ever since I have been in this house. The hon. member for Battle River (Mr. Spencer) has done so. Now a national health policy involves the consideration of several factors, among them being, first, the position of the individual himself—not the question of the municipalities or the provinces, but the position of the individual himself and herself. The provinces have claimed, and I have not disputed it, that in respect to health they are in a better position to deal with individuals than anybody else. Result: in many parts of Canada you have municipal hospitals and you have travelling dental clinics. In many parts of Canada

[Mr. MacInnis.]

the provinces have established a sort of outpost for the purpose of caring for those who are ill. These are facts. How can you apply the national provisions of this statute with respect to unemployment to that health condition? That is the problem, and we believe we have tackled it in the only way in which it can by any possible chance be successfully tackled. I have heard the hon. member for St. Boniface talk about state medicine; I have heard the hon. member for Medicine Hat (Mr. Gershaw), the hon. member for North Winnipeg (Mr. Heaps) and the hon. member for Battle River discuss the subject. What do they mean by state medicine? Do they mean state doctors directed by the dominion, or by the provinces, or by the municipalities? Do they propose to deal with panels of doctors under the control of the dominion parliament or under the control of the provincial legislatures? None has said. We are dealing with actualities, with facts, with conditions as they exist, and we are endeavouring to lay the foundation for a national health policy. If any hon. member who has to-night decried these provisions will tell me how the foundation for this edifice can be laid except in the manner indicated I shall be obliged. Can we with one stroke of the legislative pen wipe out of existence all the provisions made by the municipalities and the provinces to deal with this problem—their hospitals, medical service, taxation to maintain them in cities, towns and villages? Take the province of Alberta with its hospitals, its taxation, taxation in the city of Calgary, municipal hospitals: how are these things to be dealt with? Are they to be wiped out with a stroke of the pen? This bill aims at laying the foundation for a national health insurance; that is its purpose. But will any hon. member point out how it can be done except as indicated here?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I will.

Mr. BENNETT: I will give the right hon. gentleman full opportunity to do so, and if he desires that I sit down while he does it I will. Let us proceed a step further. This is a national unemployment measure. In the provisions of these sections it deals with the conditions of individual employed persons throughout Canada, and there is no method by which the same definite information of a national kind can be obtained which is at all equal to that provided for in these two sections, 42 and 43. That is what they are there for. We are proceeding to meet a condition and not a theory. If this were new territory, if this were a virgin page we were turning over, as unemployment insurance is, you could say many things