

It is no easy task we have before us. But we Canadians have been faced with tough problems before and have won through. I am confident we can do so again. As Tennyson put it, let "that which they have done be but earnest of the things that they shall do."

A little over 13 years ago the secretary of the Milbank Memorial Fund wrote that "no further great advance in the conservation of health can be accomplished unless and until the concept of public health is broad enough to include not merely a limited number of protective measures such as the control of communicable diseases, but all preventive and curative medicine and education in hygiene, as well as efforts to increase the economic security of the people.... These services -- preventive and curative -- should be made available to all classes of the population, not merely to the rich and the indigent, not only in some localities and some areas."

We have come a long way in our social thinking since those words were written. The concepts outlined there are much more widely accepted today than they ever have been before. As I noted a few minutes ago, a new phrasing of them appears in the constitution of the World Health Organization. Let us be done once and for all with the ancient narrow, negative concept of public health and set before our eyes this broader, more generous and humane ideal.

But truly, as St. James said, faith without works is dead. To achieve the goal of maximum standards of health and welfare services in Canada requires the united efforts of every organization presently engaged in these activities, whether they be governmental or private. We in the Department of National Health and Welfare have as our overall aim the ideal of seeing that by one means or another the Canadian people get the best possible health and welfare services. To that end we are prepared to work to the best of our ability and in any way within our power with any agency which is genuinely concerned with achieving that goal.

Let us bear in mind, however, that no act formulated by a government, no program sponsored by any group is of much value unless it gets down to individual cases. Health is paramountly a matter of individual concern -- not just for the man in the next block, for the farmer two concessions away or for the child across the street, but for you and me. It is up to us whether or not the high goals we have set are ever achieved.

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