

NEW NORTHERN HEALTH SERVICE

CARE OF INDIANS, ESKIMOS: The health of Canada's northland is to have a new look.

In a joint announcement on May 26, the Minister of National Health and Welfare, Mr. Paul Martin, and the Minister of Northern Affairs, Mr. Jean Lesage, told of plans for a new Northern Health Service to make a concerted attack on one of the biggest problems of the north - the health of its people.

The million and a half square miles of Canada which lie north of sixty degrees are the most sparsely populated in the country, and conditions there are about as difficult as doctors and public health officers find anywhere. You cannot put a hospital in every settlement of 100 people even if the nearest medical facilities are 1,000 miles away. The land is rugged, and the travel is tough.

DISTANCE PROBLEM

The doctor who hears by radio about an epidemic in a remote Eskimo settlement may be able to reach his patients only by parachute drop or dog team. He may have to work only with instruments and drugs which he can carry. The climate can be harsh, the facilities primitive, but the biggest problem of all is distance.

These are the conditions which have long been faced, not only by medical officers of the federal Government but by the employees of the territorial governments, by the workers of Roman Catholic and Anglican missions, by mine doctors, and by private practitioners who minister to the medical needs of Canada's most northern residents. Conditions like these can be adequately met only by a concerted effort. The Northern Health Service is the Government's answer.

The Northern Health Service is to be established as a division of the Department of National Health and Welfare. The new agency will not supersede any of the existing organizations - it will bring them together, and

help the co-ordination of policy and planning. Ordinarily health facilities are not undertaken by the federal Government except to meet direct federal responsibilities, but the unusual problems in the north demand unusual solutions. The Government expects the new agency to operate until the north has developed to the point where territorial governments have the resources and population to enable them to establish their own departments of health.

"Missionaries of the Church of England and of the Roman Catholic Church have through years of zeal and devotion, provided services under trying conditions," Mr. Lesage commented. "Other organizations, both private and community, have borne their share. The new federal agency will co-operate and help in the expansion and improvement of the service."

The agency will also operate its own hospitals, public health and nursing services and other facilities which are required for National Defence staff and for Eskimos and Indians whose health is normally a federal responsibility.

WHITEHORSE HOSPITAL

The federal Government is willing in addition to help to meet territorial responsibilities for health if suitable financial arrangements can be made with the Territorial Administration.

The Minister of Northern Affairs has written members of the Yukon Territorial Council inviting the participation of the Yukon Government in the Northern Health Service.

One of the products of future planning may be a new hospital in Whitehorse. The need to replace the present military hospital may create the opportunity to build a modern all-purpose hospital to serve all territorial needs in the area. The kind of establishment which would meet present and future needs might cost about \$3,000,000.

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MANUFACTURERS' 1953 SHIPMENTS UP: Canadian manufacturers' shipments in 1953 were valued at \$17,655,723,000, up 4.2% from the preceding year's \$16,939,275,000, according to estimates contained in the first issue of a new quarterly publication released by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. First-quarter shipments were valued at \$4,260,202,000 (\$4,007,196,000 a year earlier); second quarter, \$4,666,716,000 (\$4,354,588,000); third quarter, \$4,428,724,000 (\$4,222,696,000); and fourth quarter, \$4,300,081,000 (\$4,354,795,000).

Shipments of consumers' goods in the full year climbed in value to \$10,837,028,000 from \$10,442,823,000, non-durables accounting for \$6,514,079,000 compared with \$6,388,601,000,

semi-durables for \$2,237,542,000 compared with \$2,279,289,000, and durables for \$2,086,207,000 compared with \$1,774,933,000. Shipments of producers' goods rose to \$3,405,683,000 from \$3,352,931,000, capital goods to \$2,064,194,000 from \$1,828,741,000, and construction goods to \$1,348,018,000 from \$1,314,780,000.

Shipments were highest in value in the foods and beverages group of industries at \$3,391,022,000 compared with \$3,460,436,000 in 1952, second highest in transportation equipment at \$2,200,286,000 compared with \$1,800,742,000, third highest in iron and steel products at \$2,038,059,000 compared with \$2,134,759,000, and fourth highest in paper products at \$1,565,385,000 compared with \$1,502,835,000.