

A considerable measure of social security is already provided under federal and provincial legislation, but the working out of a comprehensive national scheme, in which federal and provincial activities will be integrated and which will include nation-wide health insurance, will require further consultation and close co-operation with the provinces. My Ministers will welcome opportunities for such consultation.

When suitable agreements are reached with the provinces, My Ministers will be prepared to recommend measures to provide for federal assistance in a nation-wide system of health insurance, and for a national scheme of contributory old age pensions on a more generous basis than that at present in operation.

The family and the home are the foundation of national life. To aid in ensuring a minimum of well-being to the children of the nation and to help gain for them a closer approach to equality of opportunity in the battle of life, you will be asked to approve a measure making provision for family allowances.

My Ministers believe that the time is rapidly approaching when a Minister of the Crown should be responsible for each of the three broad fields of post-war planning. You will accordingly be asked to approve the establishment of the following departments of government:—

(1) A Department of Veterans' Affairs to have charge of the rehabilitation and re-establishment of members of the armed forces, and the administration of veterans' pensions and allowances;

(2) A Department of Reconstruction to promote and co-ordinate planning for national development and post-war employment; and

(3) A Department of Social Welfare to organize and to assist in administering activities of the federal government in the fields of health and social insurance.

Underlying efforts for the winning of the war and the solution of post-war problems is the necessity of preventing the inflationary effects of war. My Ministers believe that to prevent inflation and to safeguard a basic standard of living it remains necessary to maintain the price ceiling and stabilization of wages and salaries.

To ensure economic stability for agriculture, you will be asked to make provision for a price floor for staple farm products.

Among other matters to which your attention will be directed will be the revision of the Bank Act, and the provision of adequate facilities for the exercise of the franchise by men and women serving in the armed forces.

*Members of the House of Commons:*

You will be asked to make financial provision for the effective prosecution of the war and for other necessary services.

*Honourable Members of the Senate:*

*Members of the House of Commons:*

I express, I know, the thoughts of all Canada when I say with what pride and admiration we have followed the exploits of our armed forces. At sea, on land and in the air, the fighting men of Canada, wherever they have served, have displayed the highest courage, endurance and skill. I give them your assurance that their lives are more precious to their country than all else, and that it is our supreme aim to ensure their early and victorious return to their homeland.