



Bulletin

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HEALTH COSTS AND HOSPITAL INSURANCE

During the recent Conference of Canadian Ministers of Health held in Ottawa, attention was given to the rise in health costs, in particular the increased expense of hospital insurance. After discussion, the Conference, under the chairmanship of Mr. John Munro, federal Minister of National Health and Welfare, recommended that a committee be set up consisting of representatives of the federal and each of the provincial governments, and that its task be "by discussion and pooling of information, to advise the Conference of Canadian Ministers of Health on ways and means by which the cost of operating health services could be maintained at a reasonable level". "The recommendations of this committee," it was agreed, "would not be binding on any government. The committee's recommendations whether adopted by the provinces or not, would not in any way affect the formula of financial participation by the Federal Government."

MEDICARE

Several provinces indicated their concern that, although the Federal Government was urging them to participate in the Medical Care Programme, it was, apparently, simultaneously doing its best to withdraw from this and other joint programmes, and thus leaving them in the lurch. Some provinces also objected to the federal policy (also followed in the Hospital Insurance Programme) of not counting utilization fees paid by residents of a province in computing the national average *per capita* cost and thus penalizing other provinces which do not impose these fees. This is a requirement of the Act, and is not a matter of interpretation.

The Federal Government restated its intention of proceeding with the Medical Care Programme. No

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change in the Act or in the interpretation of it was envisaged.

On the question of broadening the base of the benefit coverage, as permitted under Section 4 (3) of the Act, it was confirmed that the Federal Government would not consider further extension of benefits until the intentions of all the provinces regarding participation in the Medical Care Programme had been made clear.

HEALTH GRANTS

The Federal Government announced its intention to phase-out certain parts of the General Health Grants Programme over a three-year period. The grants were begun in 1948, with the purpose of initiating and extending various health programmes in the provinces. The federal intention of phasing-out is based on the fact that the objects of the programme have largely been attained. It was stated that the Government intended to continue the Public Health Grants to provide direct financial support for projects of national interest carried out by a number of agencies, including provincial health departments, national and provincial health agencies and voluntary health organizations.

The provinces expressed their strong displeasure at this phased withdrawal, stating that they firmly believed the purpose of the grants was to aid continuing programmes of health protection in the provinces.

It was agreed that there would be consultation with the provinces before any funds were allocated to other than provincial health departments under the proposed new National Grants Programme.

HOSPITAL CONSTRUCTION

The Federal Government also announced that it would cease financial participation in the Hospital Construction Grants Programme. This programme was also begun in 1948 for a five-year period, and successive five-year extensions were given until that ending in 1968.

The provinces once again expressed dismay at federal withdrawal from an area they regarded as one of their prior concerns. They contended that the programme was essential to providing the proper ratios of the various types of hospital bed, which they saw as a key to controlling hospitalization costs.

No consensus was reached on the announcement.

HEALTH RESOURCES

The Minister of National Health and Welfare announced a limitation on expenditures from the Health Resources Fund during 1968-69 of \$37,540,000 and a probable similar limitation in expenditures during foreseeable years. He also suggested a method of distributing the annual amount available.

The provinces referred to assurances given in the past, and expressed strong opposition to the decision to limit annual expenditures from the Fund. They put forward suggestions for improving the method of distributing available moneys and the Minister undertook to review these suggestions and their effect on immediate provincial plans for the construction of health-training facilities.

The provinces urged that the \$175 million unallocated from the Fund be made available on a *per capita* basis. The Minister noted that the allocation of this additional amount would not make more moneys available in the immediate future in the light of the yearly ceilings.

HEALTH OF INDIANS

It was proposed by the federal Minister of Health that the Federal Government cease to reimburse the provinces for any treatment of Indians from reserves at present being extended by a provincial facility, if the charges incurred were any higher than those which would be charged to any other resident of the province. The Minister reaffirmed the intent of the Federal Government to remain in and to improve its direct health services in remote areas of the provinces and in the northern territories.

It was the unanimous contention of the provinces, however, that, while they were willing to extend all their health services to every provincial resident, including Indians on reserves, the Federal Government had a moral obligation to pay the cost of these services.

It was finally agreed that a committee be formed at the deputy ministerial level to formulate recommendations on how both the federal and the provincial governments could contribute to the general improvement of Indian health.

AIR POLLUTION

Mr. Munro presented a brief statement emphasizing the seriousness of pollution as an environmental

health problem and the need for urgent and co-operative action at all levels of government. He suggested that both levels of government work together to establish national standards on pollution, under the framework of a National Clean Air Act.

Mr. Munro referred to plans, in consultation with the provinces, to establish a national sampling network and to develop appropriate standards of air quality and emission standards for motor vehicles.

The federal involvement in the problem of air pollution was welcomed by several of the provinces. They also expressed the view that a tax-incentive scheme should be considered.

DRUG ABUSE

The Conference discussed the growing social problem, in Canada, of the rise of drugs and chemical substances for non-medical purposes and agreed on the need for a co-ordinated approach encompassing the medical, legal, sociological, psychological and educational aspects of the problem.

The Ministers emphasized the need for close and continuing co-operation between the federal and provincial levels of Government in the implementation of a programme designed to deal with this problem in a comprehensive manner.

FIRM WINS BRNO TRADE MEDAL

The Electrovert Manufacturing Company Limited of Montreal recently won a gold medal at the Brno International Trade Fair in Czechoslovakia. A total of 396 entries from 21 countries competed for the award, which was created in 1964 for "those exhibitors who display a product representing peak performance of the mechanical and electrical engineering industries".

The gold medal, which was awarded to Electrovert for its wavesoldering unit (WASL), is the first such medal ever awarded to a Canadian company. Electrovert was one of eight Canadian companies exhibiting at the trade fair under the sponsorship of the Department of Trade and Commerce.

Several orders were gained by the companies, which was the prime purpose of their participation, and it is expected that these initial orders will lead to substantial new business.

The WASL, which is manufactured at Electrovert's plant at Laprairie, Quebec, is used extensively by aerospace and electronic industries.

Much of the success of the company is owing to export sales, initially gained through trade fairs sponsored by the Department of Trade and Commerce. Electrovert has exhibited in North and South America, Europe, Africa, Australia and Japan. The Japanese are Electrovert's best customers.

The total number of poultry on farms in Canada, excluding Newfoundland, at June 1, 1968, was estimated at 85.8 million birds, 4.3 percent less than the 89.6 million at June 1, 1967.

INVESTMENT OUTLOOK FOR 1969

Mr. Otto Lang, the Acting Minister of Trade and Commerce, has released the results of a field survey of 1969 capital-spending intentions of some 150 large companies in Canada. This annual survey is designed to provide a preliminary indication of the likely trend in total business investment in the coming year.

The survey shows that these companies plan to increase expenditure on new construction, machinery and equipment from \$4.8 billion in 1968 to \$5.2 billion in 1969, an increase of about 8 per cent. In 1968, the same companies have increased their spending by about 2 per cent compared to spending in 1967.

SIGNIFICANCE OF SAMPLE

The companies surveyed account for about three-fifths of total non-agricultural business investment in Canada; past experience has shown that their investment plans reflect fairly closely the intentions of Canadian business as a whole. The results of the survey provide a reliable indication of a significant acceleration in the growth of capital spending in 1969 in the business sector of the economy.

Among the companies selected, capital spending planned for 1969 on manufacturing shows the most rapid increase, 14 percent over actual spending in

1968. Electric-power companies also plan a significantly higher level of investment in 1969, 11 percent above that of 1968. More moderate increases are planned in the other major industry groups, ranging from 1 per cent for mining companies to 5 per cent for companies in the oil-and-gas industry.

RETURN TO NORMAL

Commenting on their expanding investment programmes, a number of companies report that influences that exerted a restraining effect on investment during 1967 and 1968, such as uncertainties relating to cost, financing and growth prospects, have diminished somewhat. As a consequence, the companies are resuming a more normal expansion of capital facilities to meet current and prospective demands.

The capital-spending plans covered in this survey relate to business investment only. Estimates of investments by government, house-builders and institutions will appear in the regular annual report on the capital investment outlook.

This survey of business investment intentions for 1969 was carried out in conjunction with a survey by the Economic Council of Canada covering investment plans of large companies over the next several years, the results of which will appear in a subsequent report to be published by the Economic Council.

CUSO ATTAINS MEMBERSHIP GOAL

The Canadian University Service Overseas, a private organization that started with 71 volunteers in 1961, reached its long-range goal of 1,200 members at the end of September, the executive secretary Frank Bogdasavich said recently.

CUSO officers, elated by a recent \$2,374,000-Federal Government grant, completed the enrolment by recruiting mainly technicians and specialists, concentrating less on the search for university graduates with general degrees in arts and science.

The organization now has volunteers between the ages of 21 and 28 working in 43 countries in the Caribbean, Africa, Latin America and Asia.

"The most pressing need in the developing countries is for specialists and we concentrate on finding them, still giving attention of course, to recruitment of persons holding general university degrees," Mr. Bogdasavich said.

CUSO, a completely independent organization, is supported by private contributions, Canadian Government grants and the governments of host countries.

Its guiding policy, said Mr. Bogdasavich, was one of non-interference in foreign affairs. "We work in already-established government departments, schools or other areas where our services have been asked for," he declared.

Workers do not try to change existing social structures or the economies of developing countries.

They concentrate instead on "doing the job they were asked to do and are responsible primarily to the government of the host country and secondarily to CUSO".

This year, CUSO has already collected nearly \$300,000 in private contributions to bolster assistance from the Government.

Foreign governments pay volunteers a living allowance or salary comparable to that paid native people in similar jobs. Such payments total about \$2 million a year.

FISH FOR NIGERIA AND BIAFRA

Further supplies of salted codfish for Nigerian-Biafran relief are to be purchased from Canadian east coast producers, Mr. Jack Davis, the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry, announced recently. The Fisheries Prices Support Board, an agency reporting to the Minister, will call tenders for the supply of 5 million pounds of salted fish, to be delivered early in 1969.

Mr. Davis said the new requirements would be drawn from stocks of fish still in the hands of east coast fishermen. Suppliers of the finished product are now required to buy equivalent quantities of the raw material from fishermen.

Because of its high protein value, dried salted fish is a prime food requirement of relief organizations

operating in Nigeria and other countries which receive aid from Canada. A shipment of 6.5 million pounds, part of the 1967 production surplus, has been sent to the Nigeria-Biafra war zone. Part of this consignment was provided by church and private relief agencies, but the supplies were provided by the Government of Canada through the Canadian International Development Agency.

FIRST WORLD WAR EXHIBITION

One hundred Canadian veterans of the First World War visited Ottawa during the Armistice weekend and were the guests of honour at the opening of a display entitled "Canada and the First World War" at the Canadian War Museum.

Brigadier Frederick M. Harvey of Calgary, winner of the Victoria Cross in 1917, opened the exhibition. Brigadier Harvey was commandant of the veterans' group, which included V.C. winners, senior officers, representatives of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment and members of the Senate and House of Commons.

The exhibition, which commemorates the fiftieth anniversary of the Armistice, was opened to the public on November 10. It contains 70 panels of exhibits depicting Canada's role in the war from 1914 to 1918, which trace the growth of the war effort from amateur beginnings to the achievements of the Canadian Corps, a powerful striking force on the Western Front. Much of the material consists of items that have not been exhibited to the public for many years. (See also *Canadian Weekly Bulletin*, Vol. 23, No. 36, P. 3.)

NEW STAMPS ANNOUNCED

On November 1, a 6-cent regular issue stamp took its place as an addition to a definitive series of five released in February 1967, and a 6-cent Christmas stamp depicting Eskimo carving became available on November 15. The latter stamp supplements a previously-announced 5-cent value for use on Christmas mailings. (See *Canadian Weekly Bulletin*, Vol. 23, No. 43, P. 3.)

The additional photogravure Christmas value, of medium size, 24 mm. x 30 mm., in a vertical format, features a reproduction of an Eskimo carving, "Mother and Child" by Munamee of Cape Dorset, Baffin Island, which was presented to Queen Elizabeth on the occasion of her visit to Canada in 1951. An ochre background has been used behind the black portrayal of the carving; a horizontal "Canada" appears in a lower white panel beneath the predomi-

nant ochre and a full-width white "Christmas - Noël" surmounts the design. A denominative "6", also in white, appears immediately under the word "Christmas". A total of 73 million copies of this stamp will be printed by the Canadian Bank Note Company, Ottawa, whose artists produced the design.

REGULAR ISSUE

The new orange-coloured 6-cent regular issue engraved stamp, compatible with other values now in use, emphasizes the importance of transportation and communications in unifying the five major economic regions depicted on the 1-cent to 5-cent series. The new issue has dimensions of 24 mm. x 20 mm. To the left is a modern high-speed locomotive designed for interurban use. Highway transport is symbolized by a truck and a bus. In the background is a lake vessel, and overhead flies a medium-range jet aircraft. The communications aspect is epitomized by a microwave tower, typical of a continent-spanning system supplementing land-line and cable connections. As in previous denominations in this series, a recent portrait of Queen Elizabeth, engraved from a photograph by Anthony Buckley, is incorporated in the right section of the stamp.

HOME BUILDING IN OCTOBER

Preliminary figures recently released by Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation show that 16,984 dwelling units were started in urban centres in Canada during October - 20.2 percent more than the figure of a year ago.

For all areas, urban and rural, this represents a seasonally-adjusted rate of 214,800 units a year, a substantial increase from the September rate of 155,200 units.

Most of the October increase in urban centres was in apartment and other multiple-unit dwellings - 12,805 units compared to 9,230 units in October 1967, a 38.7 percent increase.

There was also a modest increase during the month in starts on single-detached dwellings, which brought the total of all types of dwelling starts in urban centres for the first ten months of the year to 128,256 units.

This figure represents for urban centres an increase of some 17,000 units, or 15.3 per cent, over the comparable January-October 1967 total of 111,207 dwelling units. All of this was in multiple-dwelling starts, up by 27.8 per cent, while there was, over the ten months, a decline of 7.2 per cent in starts of single-detached dwellings.

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