problems by several major events during 1963. Early in the year, the Restrictive Trade Practices Commission, reporting on the manufacture, distribution and sale of drugs in Canada, recommended, among other things, that patents with respect to drugs be abolished, this being stated to be the only effective way to reduce the prices of drugs. Alberta passed legislation designed to extend the coverage and scope of plans offered by commercial and by non-profit medical care insurance agencies on a voluntary basis. The government involvement is confined to setting out optimum levels of premiums and of comprehensive benefits for approved and licensed voluntary agencies, and to providing from general revenues subsidization of premiums for those residents who cannot afford the premiums. The Alberta plan started to operate late in 1963. In Ontario, a Bill similar to the Alberta legislation and called "An Act Respecting Medical Services Insurance" was given second reading on Apr. 25, 1963, and referred to a public committee for study. The committee began public hearings later in the year.

In May 1963, the Ontario Legislature passed the Pension Benefits Act which provided for the compulsory extension, improvement and solvency of private pension plans and for the portability of pension benefits. In July 1963, the Federal Government introduced in the House of Commons the resolution preceding the introduction of a Bill to provide for a nation-wide contributory old age insurance program. The government of the Province of Quebec indicated about the same time that it would introduce an old age and survivors insurance program for persons employed in that province. In the last half of 1963 three federal-provincial conferences were held at which the question of old age pension insurance was discussed, and that part of the Ontario legislation relating to the extension of private pension plans was suspended pending examination and study of the federal plan.

In March 1964, the Federal Government introduced a resolution and gave first reading to a Bill "to establish a comprehensive program of old age pensions in Canada payable to contributors and survivors". Subsequently, the government of Quebec made public the provisions of the old age, survivors and disability insurance program which it intends to introduce. Through consultation between the federal and Quebec governments, an agreement was reached that the federal and the Quebec Bills would have identical provisions so that legislation with respect to old age, survivors and disability insurance benefits would be uniform across the country. Discussions between the federal and provincial governments on the arrangements for implementation of the program continued.

At the federal-provincial conference in September 1963, it was suggested that the whole field of social assistance should be generally re-examined in the hope of developing one general assistance program based on need. Subsequently, the proposal was discussed by officials of the two levels of government and in May 1964 the federal and provincial Ministers of Welfare met to discuss the problem.

Late in 1963, the old age security pension was raised from $65 to $75 a month. The maximum rate of old age assistance, blind persons allowances and disability allowances in which the Federal Government would share was raised from $65 to $75 a month per recipient. All ten provinces agreed to share the costs of these three programs at the new maximum rates.

In his Budget Speech of March 1964, the Minister of Finance announced that the Federal Government proposed to extend family allowances, at the rate of $10 a month, to children aged 16 and 17 attending full-time educational or training courses. Legislation to this effect was passed by the House of Commons on July 7, 1964.

## PART I.—PUBLIC HEALTH

Provincial governments bear the major responsibility for health services in Canada, with the municipality often assuming considerable authority over matters delegated to it by provincial legislation. The Federal Government has jurisdiction over a number of