

Without going into the policy in detail or expressing an opinion on it at the moment, I raise the point for the purpose of showing what organized agriculture seems to think about the necessity for a closer liaison between the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Trade and Commerce and the organized activities of agriculture itself.

In dealing with the reference in the speech from the throne to national social insurance, I shall not have much to say at present except this: I was surprised to note that the policy with respect to national social insurance, one of the most important problems injected into the dominion political arena for many a day, has been given to a select committee of the house to determine. Perhaps the Prime Minister will be able to explain it—I know he will be able to explain it; whether successfully or not is the only question—but I should have thought the necessary legislation would be brought down in the form of bills, as has been done in the past, the bills, fitting as they would into a national plan, then to be referred to a select committee for review and report back to this house. I think the government should have presented to the house and to the country a policy of national social insurance, rather than leaving it to a committee of the house. I may be wrong in the assumption, but I know there will be a great many people in Canada who think the way I do. This would not by any chance be the answer, would it?—that there was no time after the adoption of the social security programme at the Winnipeg convention for legislation to be drafted for submission to the house? I leave the question with the Prime Minister, because it naturally arises and perhaps offers the explanation of the existing situation.

Having regard to the situation that has arisen out of this reference in the speech from the throne I think a great national plan for Canada is essential, a plan which will guarantee to all our citizens freedom from fear and from want. The less time we take to reach that objective the better for all of us. Right now democracy is going through a severe testing time. Democracy must show that it can meet modern conditions by the use of modern remedies. There is no reason under the sun why this democratic state cannot be in the forefront of world reform, and show the other systems, sometimes so highly praised, not only that they are not as good as ours but that they fall far behind the results that democracy can and will produce. We shall not be satisfied in Canada until we have worked out, not merely as good a plan of social insurance for our people as exists

elsewhere, but the best there is in the whole world. Our citizens deserve it, and the government must recognize their deserts.

The Progressive Conservative party has taken a definite stand with respect to several points in connection with national social insurance. I should like to take a moment to read one or two of those points:

1. Every person able and willing to work must be assured of gainful occupation with sufficient means to maintain a home and family. The objective is full employment at fair wages under progressively improving standards. We oppose relief as a substitute for work.

2. For the achievement of that objective—full employment at fair wages under progressively improving standards—and for the welfare and development of society, we strongly advocate the strengthening of the basic Canadian tradition of individual initiative and individual enterprise and opportunity, and the freeing of economic activities from bureaucratic controls. Government authority, however, should be maintained and exercised wherever necessary to protect primary producers, workers and consumers from exploitation through such abuses as price-fixing combines, monopolies and patent cartels.

To those ends we believe that government should seek to create conditions under which the maximum volume of employment and the maximum national income may be assured through the initiative and enterprise of the people themselves.

3. It is the duty of the state:

(a) to maintain at high level the income and standard of living of the individual citizen, whose interests must always be paramount.

(b) to maintain the principle of private initiative and enterprise.

(c) to initiate, undertake and control projects of public and national benefit in those fields in which private enterprise is precluded from serving or is unable to serve the public interest.

4. Consideration should be given to the problems of the workers-on-their-own who comprise a large percentage of the people of this country and who lack the benefit of organization to protect their interests—the small retail merchant, the man or woman in services of various kinds, such as the carter, truck-driver and taximan, the odd-jobber, the handyman and the salesman on commission. Recognition must be given to their enterprise and initiative and to their threatened security and a way found by properly constituted authority to protect their interests as essential workers, consumers and taxpayers.

5. (a) Youth should be educated, trained and given equal opportunity to equip themselves for life.

(b) Those of working age should be provided with ample opportunity for adult education.

6. We believe that the reconstruction of post-war Canadian economy must be based upon the following principle set forth in section 5 of the Atlantic Charter:

“Fifth: They desire to bring about the fullest collaboration between all nations in the economic field with the object of securing for all, improved labour standards, economic advancement and social security.”