

The fact is that no country today has control of its own affairs and, within a country, no individual, no group, no profession, no occupation has sole control of its affairs. Even the farmers - or should I say especially the farmers - share that control with others, especially with those they have chosen to act for them - as Canadians - in Parliament and government and with officialdom.

Because government today has so much influence and control over the lives of its citizens - a control which became inescapable when those citizens began to demand more and more from government in the form of services and assistance and security - you, naturally, as farmers and as citizens are anxious to ensure that this control - this influence - be exercised in your best interest. That is certainly a legitimate anxiety and activity - the exercise of co-operative group influence on government - providing it is done responsibly and constructively; and with full recognition of the fact that influence is also exercised by other groups, of producers and even consumers; and that government has to balance and weigh these sometimes conflicting pressures.

Indeed, without the right kind of influence in and on government, exercised by organizations which reflect public opinion, there might be little change or little progress. The English 17th century philosopher Bacon said, "That which man changes not for the better, time, the great innovator, changes for the worse".

It is therefore the duty of government to do what it can to see that man makes changes for the better and to make the "adjustment to the inevitable" - which is the art of politics - as smooth and productive as possible.

A distinguished professor in Toronto, at whose feet I once sat and even learned a little Latin, wrote the other day that "Government was the administration of the unintended". That may be to a greater extent than we think. There is far more in politics and history that results from accident than the historians realize or the politicians admit. But it is the objective of Federation such as yours, to ensure that, in so far as farm policy is concerned, accident is reduced to a minimum and that policies are worked out beforehand to meet the needs of agriculture which, however, are inseparable from the needs of the rest of the Canadian people.

It is, as I have said, the function of government to balance your proposals and assess your needs in the light of other demands and other needs. It is not an easy function to perform to everybody's satisfaction, federally or provincially and no democratic government can attempt it without encountering difficulties. If I may adapt a quotation, I would put it this way, Government - any government - these days is in trouble with some of the people all of the time, most of the people some of the time, but not, I hope, with all of the people all of the time. If the latter fate overtakes it, it soon ceases to be a government! It is not an easy life for any of us in 1954. Willa Cather, the poet, once said "Life is hard for most people, and when its easy, its hardest of all". There are times, however, I must confess, when I find it difficult to accept that philosophy that a life of ease is really a life of hardship and vice versa.