

markets we must use every technological advance in automated equipment, processing, purchasing and marketing available to us, and we must continually encourage our manufacturers to seek quality design.

Even if we could successfully avoid the so-called technological revolution, we should be acting contrary to our own ultimate best interests were we to do so. There can be no doubt that, in the long run, automation holds out the promise of benefits to all members of society in the form of material abundance and leisure time....

The threat of automation is that it overlooks the individual for the sake of industrial sophistication. In the head-on meeting between established techniques of collective bargaining and the new urgings of technological innovation lies the explanation for many of the breakdowns in industrial relations, which we have recently witnessed.

#### BASIC PRINCIPLES

This, then, is the setting for government's response to automation. We have established our basic principles: first, government's fundamental concern in the problem must be with the welfare of the human beings it affects; second, to fulfill its responsibility, government must take the technological revolution seriously and plan ahead; third, in preparing its strategy to meet automation, government must recognize that technological change, if properly controlled and encouraged, can prove a major benefit to our society. As I have suggested, these three principles lead to the major problem that government must face in its approach to automation - the need to safeguard the individual's welfare while providing for the ultimate good of society.

There is no simple answer to this complex problem. In my opinion, the solution lies in many pragmatic decisions implemented step by step with one eye on the problem and one on the people it affects.

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

This brings me to the question of specifics. Let us consider what the Government is now doing about automation.

The first thing it is doing is assisting labour and management to co-operate in trying to cushion the impact of technological innovations.

A very important document in this area, as you well know, is the Freedman Report. Looking behind the particular circumstances of that report, I think you will find that it contains two fundamental propositions. It presumes that labour is a full partner in our productive system and, as such, should be consulted by management before changes affecting material conditions of work are implemented. It also proposes that the responsibility of an employer for his employees extends beyond the specific period of hire. A company cannot just dispense with its workers in the way that it scraps worn-out or outmoded equipment.

At least part of the solution to the problems outlined by the Freedman Report does lie in greater employer-employee communication and co-operation.

It is the job of government to help bring the two industrial partners together on neutral ground, where trust and co-operation are possible. To undertake this task the Federal Government has two major services available....

The Labour-Management Consultation Branch of my Department - Labour - might be called the prelude - the all-important stage-setter for any subsequent labour-management discussions on any mutual topic. And today, with technological advances coming so rapidly that it is impossible to cover all the possibilities in the usual collective bargaining agreements, joint consultation on a continuing basis between labour and management, in my view, is essential, preferably continuing joint consultation between top management and the union executive so that both sides can give authoritative answers immediately.

Where the Labour-Management Consultation Branch deals with, and encourages the philosophy of talking over any mutual problems together, the Manpower Consultative Service is designed to advise management and labour on how to meet particular technological changes.

This service provides technical assistance and financial support for research at the plant and industry level on the impact of technological and other changes. It is designed to encourage the development of joint labour-management advance planning, and I stress the word advance, as a means of developing constructive programmes for manpower adjustment. For those who are to be displaced by technology, we are endeavouring, through this new approach, to bring to bear the services of the Canada Manpower Centres, formerly the National Employment Service, in advance of lay-offs, to find alternative employment opportunities and to assist financially in the movement of workers and their dependents to other communities where there are employment opportunities. The Manpower Consultative Service also assists in bringing into advance play federal-provincial training programmes where these are helpful in adapting workers to other occupations.

#### TRAINING PROGRAMMES

Once the company and its unions have discussed the coming change, what then? For employees who are to stay with the company in new jobs, there are on-the-job training and upgrading programmes where the employees learn new skills. These on-the-job training programmes are also available where companies cannot find skilled workers and so elect to train their own employees in their own plant....

But what of the worker who finds that automated techniques have wiped out his job entirely and there is no other job for him in the company where he has been working? This person has three different courses open to him. He may find another local company needing his skills; he may decide that he needs a new skill; or he may decide to move to a new area. The simplest solution may well be for the worker to find another job locally. Under these circumstances, the Canada Manpower Centres stand ready to be of assistance.