

● (5:20 p.m.)

It is in this sense that the Prime Minister is almost right when he suggests that in terms of welfare we have gone about as far as we can go. It is also his implied suggestion, that it is as far as we should go, that makes me believe that the Prime Minister is a profoundly conservative man. His vision extends to the welfare state, but not one step beyond. His vision of the just society is what we almost have. To defend what we have and to refuse to go beyond is to cease to lead. And to cease to lead beyond the welfare state is to leave Canadians with a kind of society which is inherently inegalitarian, inherently acquisitive, and inherently unjust.

Having indicated substantial agreement with the Prime Minister on the nature of the welfare state I want now to proceed to suggest why we New Democrats—unlike the Prime Minister and the Liberal party—cannot accept it as being an adequate kind of society. Perhaps the major objection to the welfare state is that for all its advantages it rests on a grossly inadequate understanding of democracy. In Canada today children are taught in schools throughout the land that our country is democratic primarily because there is more than one political party and because citizens have both the right to criticize and the right to change their rulers every few years. This view of democracy, Mr. Speaker, is a distinctly modern phenomenon and is in marked contrast with the understanding of democracy of both the early Greeks and 19th century Europeans. Prior to our century democracy was seen by its defenders and critics alike as a kind of society in which all adults played an active, participatory role not only in the formal institutions of government but also in all the institutions which crucially affected their daily lives. Similarly a democratic society had been seen previously as one in which all its members had an equal opportunity to develop their capacities and talents; it was not seen as one in which citizens had an equal opportunity to earn more money or advance up the class ladder.

It is this old view of democracy that we must once again take up. We must use its standards and apply them to Canadian society. We must once again talk about equality. We must see justice and equality as going together. Of course, Mr. Speaker, if we do this we know we will find our society grossly inadequate and significantly unjust. Every sociological study done in European and

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North American welfare states in recent years has revealed their inherently inegalitarian nature. One of the most important of these, Professor John Porter's "The Vertical Mosaic" documents in chapter after chapter the inequalities of Canada's social system. The recent report of the Economic Council of Canada provides additional concrete information on the existence of economic inequality.

It might well be granted that this is the case. But what, asks the defender of the status quo, can be done about it? The answer, Mr. Speaker, is a lot. We must begin by insisting that in a democratic society—in, if you would a just society—all adults should have equal rights in all those institutions which directly affect them. Where authority is delegated, then those to whom it is delegated must be responsible to those over whom they exercise their authority.

In concrete examples, Mr. Speaker, this means that in our factories, in our offices, and in our large commercial and financial institutions, legal power must shift from the few on the top to the many below. We can of course have no illusions about completely dispensing with authority. In a complex industrial society, this is impossible. But we can democratize authority in our non-political institutions just as we have in the political. Management can and must be made responsible to the workers, just as we are responsible to our constituents.

More than this, however, is required. Not only must legal control pass from the few to the many, but also the many must be given the right to make more of the decisions themselves. Responsible university students around the world in recent months have initiated this process on their campuses.

I urge the Canadian government to promote this development, to lead the way, not only because such democratic institutions would be more just, but also because they would be infinitely more conducive to the development of responsible and creative men and women. Karl Marx and John Stuart Mill realized this one hundred years ago. Herbert Marcuse, Erich Fromm and many others have stressed the same truth in our own day. We as the political leaders of the country have a duty to initiate this battle for a truly democratic society. We have a duty, Mr. Speaker, not simply to praise our past and celebrate our present, but also to create the future. We must reject the sterile view of both the government and the official opposition. Both the Liberal and Conservative parties are bound not by bad intentions but by an outmoded and unjust