

The experiences of the 1930s, when economic depression roused a national feeling of collective responsibility, and of the Second World War, which precipitated a rapid acceleration of the industrial and urban processes, led to dramatic changes in this situation. The necessity for income maintenance programmes of the kind that exist today was recognized by those engaged in planning towards the end of the war. Their thinking was strongly influenced by the economic theories of Keynes, Beveridge's social security blueprint for Britain and, to a lesser degree, the enactment of the Social Security Act in the United States. It became evident that the expenditures on essential social services would also stimulate the economy through the maintenance of spending power. In addition, political pressures were brought to bear by different groups of the disadvantaged, notably older people, for income support and services, and by the local and provincial authorities for the assumption by the Federal Government of a major share of the costs of income maintenance for individuals, and of health care.

Within the period of the 1950s and 1960s, most of the earliest objectives identified by social planners and incorporated in political platforms were met. Comprehensive income security schemes for the old came into effect; insured hospital care was provided in all parts of Canada; assistance for the disabled and insurance for the unemployed had wide coverage; a combined federal-provincial medical care scheme was introduced. By 1960, the social service structure which had been developed could, with reasonable effectiveness, meet the demands made on it, though some gaps remained and the rapid pace of social change calls for continuous adaptation and improvement.

The profound changes which had occurred in the structure and financing of services are reflected in financial figures. In 1926, public welfare expenditures were about \$86 million, of which about 57 per cent was contributed by the Federal Government, with the balance shared equally by the provinces and municipalities. In 1966-67, welfare expenditures totalled \$3,335 million, of which 80.2 per cent was federal, 18.0 per cent provincial, and 1.8 per cent municipal.

In the provision of social welfare services themselves, there have been profound changes, effected through all levels of government.

Large-scale federal programmes are aimed at eradicating illiteracy amongst Indians and Eskimos and increasing their capacity to meet the requirements of the twentieth century, whether in industrial or agricultural environments. Through regional development schemes, the Federal Government, in co-operation with the provinces, operates large-scale programmes to assist in the development of poverty-stricken areas and, through the Canada Assistance Plan, it supports a network of assistance and welfare services for all persons requiring them.

Provincial, municipal and voluntary welfare programmes, which vary in extent and in approach, cover such welfare services as those for families, for mothers and children, for the transient and homeless, as well as corrections and probation services. Local services are increasingly selective and sophisticated in their approach.