

In Canada, poverty is a fact of life. Its persistence at a time where the majority of Canadians enjoy one of the highest standards of living in the world is a disgrace.

How can we speak of a just society in Canada when a fifth of its citizens do not partake of its material wealth, when whole areas of its territory, well-defined geographically, are almost excluded from its prosperity?

How can we speak of a just society when, we know from experience what difficulties certain classes of our society encounter to pick up those crumbs of a prosperity which, in fact, is theirs by rights.

The Speech from the Throne heralds the determination of the government to establish and strengthen this just society in which all Canadians, whatever their region, their language their profession or trade, may take a full share in the affluent society which is Canada. The human mind does not know of rest. The establishment of a just society is everybody's responsibility. It is a primordial and essential truth, which cannot bear one instant of apathy. In particular, it is our truth, the truth of the members of this Parliament and of the Senate. There will always be problems, evils to suppress, improvements to make. The progress of science and technology are changing the world each day, and every government must be ready to adapt itself to inevitable changes. None of their gaps can be filled without a constant intellectual effort, without financial resources which, because they are limited, must be used according to a careful and general planning and a strict order of priorities.

The just society will require the revision of our federation, with a view that justice in our country is but an idle dream without a stronger Canadian unity, a closer and more efficient co-operation between the federal Government and the provinces, both with regard to economic and financial as well as linguistic and cultural matters.

Social security programs, legislation concerning industrial relations and labour disputes must also be revised in the light of the experience now acquired and of the basic principles concerning the relations between the State and the individual. An individual realization of that fact is necessary, because the State cannot do everything; it is not a perpetual Santa Claus. It must not replace the individual and relieve him of his obligations. However, it is its responsibility to see

to it that each and every right of the individual is preserved and to protect aggressively every one of his liberties; for instance, with regard to advertising, definitely exaggerated and often deceiving, on health, consumption and investment. We must also get rid of stupid slogans religiously followed such as "Buy now, pay later".

Therefore, a just society is on the one hand a just Canada. It is also and especially a just world. Our role extends to the international society and, at that level, our responsibilities are unlimited.

We, as Canadians, are really privileged. We live in an affluent society, in a civilization whose standard of living makes it even possible to consider the organization of our leisure time, while two-thirds of the humanity fight daily for their survival.

How many men, women and children have died from hunger, disease or exhaustion since the speech from the throne was read. How many of them have fallen victims of disasters or wars of which we had a glimpse only a few days ago on our TV screens, as we thanked God we were spared. At this very minute, how many babies are born only to be doomed to about thirty years of a miserable life, obsessed by the daily hunt for a slice of bread or a bowl of rice. The gap separating the "have" and the "have not" nations is getting forever deeper at an alarming pace.

The rich become richer and the poor become poorer. The political tension between East and West is not relaxing and is second only to another tension, which is vital for mankind, between the Northern and the Southern hemispheres.

The countries of Latin America, Africa and Asia are desperately seeking to occupy the place which is theirs, by right, at the table of humanity, under which fall sparingly the remains left by privileged nations.

Two thirds of humanity call for their just society.

Our responsibilities are enormous. They are burdensome, all the more so because Heaven has gratified us with privileges we do not deserve. Just society has no nationality. A just society in Canada cannot be conceived without a just society in the world.

The setting up of such a just society in Canada and in the world will be the basic concern of our business during this session.

The Speech from the Throne is a starting point. Let all the bills we shall have to exam-