

We have been steadily widening the range of our social security legislation. The most recent addition came only a few days ago by an amendment to our Unemployment Insurance Act. This enables workers during unemployment "benefit" periods to continue to receive benefit even though they may become incapacitated by illness or accident.

These activities all bear upon the question of productivity, both in fostering the kind of social and economic climate in which productivity gains can be made, and in seeking to ensure that the largest possible number of our citizens may share in its rewards.

It is my view that one of the greatest hopes for continued gains in productivity lies in the field of industrial relations. I agree with the Committee of Experts that the responsibility for action to raise productivity in each establishment rests primarily with management. But, as the Committee goes on to say, the success of such efforts depends on the active co-operation of workers, which can only be achieved through good labour-management relations.

I have already stated my belief in the importance of free and independent labour unions. One of the significant phases of Canadian economic life in the past ten years has been the rapid growth in the number of unions and in union membership.

In Canada the emphasis in collective bargaining has been largely on economic issues and the objectives have, for the most part, been sought directly without government intervention. This is true even though Canadian labour and management leaders are in frequent and close touch with governments - federal, provincial and municipal. Both have been extremely active in making their views and desires known to government authorities.

The focal point in labour-management activities in Canada has been the collective agreement. The agreement is normally signed between a single local union on the one hand and a single employer on the other. Many cover only a dozen or so workers, although a few agreements cover thousands of men and women in large and far-flung enterprises.

These collective agreements set forth the rules of conduct to which both parties are committed as long as the contract is in force. At regular intervals - usually once a year - these rules are re-examined, both parties indicate the changes they believe should be made, and the contract is renegotiated.

Our labour legislation makes clear our reliance on collective bargaining as the normal channel for employer-employee relations.

The purpose of this legislation is to establish orderly procedures to aid labour and management in those cases where they, by themselves, are unable to reach an agreement. The Government exercises no form of pressure as to what the specific contents of a collective agreement should be. It offers every possible assistance through the certification of collective bargaining units and through