

Each new act must be judged in the light of its relative priority in our total welfare pattern and against the overall record of national productivity. There can always be too much social security; there can, just as truly, be too little.

Canadians have good reason to be proud of the way that, over the past 15 years, as this country has become more and more productive, we have steadily maintained the proportion of our national income that is devoted to measures for the health and well-being of our citizens.

In our time we have seen the humane way in which, through our concern for social need, the increased productivity of our system has been matched by a more equitable distribution of its benefits for our people. As our prosperity has increased, we have found better ways to provide against ill-health and insecurity. We have adjusted to the shoulders of an entire generation part of the burden of bringing up the young, of assisting those who are sick and in need, and of caring for the old.

The development of social measures which protect the health and welfare of the individual citizen, protect the very prosperity dependent on his well-being. This development of social security on the government level is not some new form of regimentation but, purely and simply, an effort to make the old-fashioned virtues of charity and neighborliness the inspiration of a new and orderly arrangement which is necessary if we are to meet the complex needs of modern industrial society.

If we should fall in our future planning to recognize that social justice is good business, then we would be closing our eyes to one of the most significant lessons of modern times. We must remember, however, that social security is not an end in itself. To have a prosperous economy, governments must consistently follow sound economic and fiscal policies and full scope must be given to private initiative and enterprise. No amount of social security, no matter how well conceived or well intended, can compensate for foolhardy economic policies.

In my remarks this evening, I have attempted to analyze the ingredients of Canadian prosperity -- a high level of trade, courageous investment, sound fiscal policies and responsible social measures. To these must be added that intangible pioneer spirit that can infect a nation and inspire its people to undertake and achieve the impossible. Anyone who moves across Canada today is struck by the spirit of our times -- the instinct to build and to develop and go forward. In the years ahead there is still much to be done, but as long as Canadians honour freedom, exert hard work and respect human personality, we can face the future unafraid.