

Opportunities for economic improvement must be available not only for industrial enterprise but for every member of the community. In this regard, governments can assist greatly in creating a favourable climate for free enterprise, through their economic and social policies, through their provision of research facilities, of educational and training opportunities, together with skilled job-counselling and placement services, and in many other ways.

As a foundation upon which business and individuals can realise increased productivity, we feel it should be the over-all objective to establish a sound minimum level of economic security for all people. Social security measures should be steadily improved. The maintenance of a high level of employment and income should be our goal. By the same token, hand in hand with effective collective bargaining, there must be a solid body of protective legislation - for both workers and employers. Minimum wage legislation, workmen's compensation, unemployment insurance, factory inspection, protection of the health and safety of workers, in particular young workers and women, are part of this pattern.

Beyond these measures it is important to foster the kind of labour-management relations which will tend towards higher productivity and a fair distribution of its benefits. In this connection I share the view of the committee of experts that much depends on the existence of a free, strong and independent trade union movement able to take part in collective bargaining on an equal footing with employers or their organisations.

In Canada we have endeavoured to realise all these objectives. We have sought to maintain free opportunity for economic improvement and to widen its scope, to establish a basic level of economic and social security, and to foster healthy labour-management relations. But merely to make this general statement fails to tell of the many minor projects that have gone into the main effort.

For example, we have been doing some things lately to broaden the employment opportunities for certain groups who have particular problems - such as disabled workers, female workers and older workers. We are co-ordinating in a national programme the efforts to rehabilitate disabled workers.

We are seeking to learn more about the role of the older worker. We have come to see that compulsory retirement at a fixed age, even with a fair pension, is not always the desirable objective.

We have just obtained the approval of Parliament to establish in our Federal Labour Department a women's bureau, whose task it will be, in conjunction with existing agencies, to study and advise upon employment conditions and opportunities for women workers.

To ensure fair opportunities for certain other groups, we have now passed federal legislation which forbids discrimination, on the part of employers or unions, against any person on account of race, national origin, colour or religion.