

We have also made progress towards the attainment of a greater measure of social security. In this field perhaps it is natural for a Minister of Finance not to be unduly sentimental. He must ask himself whether a programme of this sort strengthens the economy, whether it increases production by assuring a more intelligent and more healthy population, whether it lessens the haunting worry of unemployment and family illness that might otherwise impair morale and productivity, whether it makes systematic provision in advance against the inevitable contingencies and to that extent makes it unnecessary when adversity comes for the state to step in with improvised and expensive construction or other remedial programmes. Inevitably there will be differences of opinion in regard to such matters and progress can only be permanent if the steps taken carry the general judgment. Advances in social welfare involve a price, and willingness of society to pay that price must be a condition of such advances.

In our federal state, responsibility for social security is of course divided between the provinces and the central government, and it has been the aim of the Government with which I have been associated to promote the maximum degree of co-operation between these two levels of Government. In August, 1945, the Dominion Government put forward proposals which assumed a broad federal responsibility, in co-operation with provincial governments, for the support of national minimum standards of social services. Unfortunately, it did not prove possible to achieve agreement of all provinces on the financial arrangements which was a