

A RESPONSIBLE SOCIETY -- IS THE CHALLENGE TOO GREAT?

A speech delivered by

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In today's world everybody's looking for formulas - for - success - be he the student in college, the worker in a factory, the girl in the office, or the nations groping around --- all seek that ideal which is really within their own purview and control.

Since time immemorial, three elements which have most contributed to success of individuals - and nations - have, and continue to be INITIATIVE - RESPONSIBILITY AND CREATIVITY - elements which guarantee success!

From my vantage point, I see the situation of individuals, and of our great nation, in this perspective.

It is indeed a great pleasure to be here - to address this distinguished group of successful individuals - you, the members of the CANADIAN CLUB.

I particularly address myself to you, gentlemen, as to individuals!

My subject is not particularly easy to express or explain. It is a subject that many of us shy away from because of not wanting to get involved, or to antagonize certain segments of our society. But, I do feel that unless all of us are willing to be involved in this particular subject, we will deprive Canada of its potential that she might otherwise be able to achieve.

A study of history becomes a study of individuals. History shows us that the individual organized himself: organized all his ability, mental and physical, to become a 'superior animal'. He organized himself to become a 'special animal', and that he would have the rest of the world as his domain.

As he progressed through centuries, into the dawns of recorded history, we found that he pursued one faculty of his mental structure to progress faster, and to help himself to evolve more. So, thus, he could control his own environment and his own destiny.

This one particular faculty became his guiding light; became his sole motivating factor for advancement.

What is that particular faculty? What is that particular force? I believe that, that particular motivating spirit is initiative.

It is initiative that makes Egyptians, Persians, Romans and other civilizations to shine as the best beacons of their times.

Today, we are living in one of the most sophisticated societies that man has ever been able to devise. We have reached greater heights of intelligence, and attained more knowledge than at any previous time in our history. We would like to believe that ours is the greatest civilization that has ever been known. Yet today, we are living in constant fear; constant anxiety; constant turmoil. Why is it that man with all the experience and knowledge that he has acquired through the centuries, is unable to produce a society which eliminates all of these negative forces? Why, if anything, do they seem to be increasing, rather than diminishing?

In the last fifty years we saw the emergence of Communism from a very meager beginning to a strength that threatens the destruction of the free world. And, in the same time, during the last 50 years, we have seen the democratic form of government moving from the constructive approach to the problem of humanity, to the defensive and apologizing force.

Our concern, of course, is where all this will lead our civilization, and how long this state of affairs will continue. Both from the point of view of logic and of reason, I believe that we still have a tremendous potential on which our society can build a future world: a world that could be as perfect as anything human can be.

What kind of society am I talking about?

In the past few years, we have heard about the "affluent society". We have seen brave attempts to create a "great society" and, here in Canada, we are in the midst of a "just society". But, so far, we have seen very little that time really reflects on, and that is the true connection between the phrase and the actuality.

Gentlemen, I believe that the reason for it is simple and logical. None of these societies can be implemented unless we realize that the one society that must precede all the ones mentioned is the "Responsible Society". The "Responsible Society" that will put every individual in his choice of endeavour to produce what is maximum possible; what is maximum expected of him as the human creature. The "Responsible Society" where every individual, in every organization, and in every institution will do his utmost: propelled by the initiative to better his own lot, his own environment, and thus make himself a superior creature, that Divine Providence intended him to be.

What do I mean by "Responsible Society"?

If I may reflect just for a minute on my concept of it, I feel that responsibility rises from the initiative of the individual, modified by the individual's obligations to himself, and to his fellow human being. Responsibility is the virtue : that does not ask one to carry someone else's burden; but, it does ask every one to live up to his idealistic principles of logic, reason and charity.

My interpretation of 'responsibility' is; that it is the self-disciplinary condition of mind and will that thrives only in harmony with the law of nature, and within the framework of charity.

Although it represents the basic values of our western civilization in form, today's society does not represent them in content and spirit. Individual initiative and individual responsibility are being replaced by mediocrity and empty form of ritual. As today's society becomes more and more afraid of strong individuals, a tendency may be developing to give precedence to mediocrity.

Gentlemen, again you might wonder why I give so much emphasis to this particular philosophical approach. In recent years, we have heard a great deal about the opportunity for Canada to grow as a Nation, and to grow economically and socially, as one of the leaders of the world. But, when we observe the kind of approach that is being used today to achieve the betterment of our people, we must come logically to the conclusion that: 1) either the legislation and approach are not right and out of step with the social and economic logic; or, 2) as individuals we are not pursuing it in its original concept. I, for one, believe that the former rather than the latter is the deterrent which is stopping us from achieving the greatness that should be Canada's.

Today, we are witnessing the great lack of understanding between the public and private sectors of our economy. Let me just say, I divide our society into three important groups: first, the government; second, the voting public and third, the small part of the voting public that I shall call the 'creative' element of our society.

This particular element, whether we call it the creative, or entrepreneurship part of our society is often blamed for the ills of our society. And why? Because it is either the government that blames it for malfunctioning of its own intended promises, usually during the elections; or it is the masses that blame it for its supposedly inhuman devotion to monetary goals.

I, for one, feel that the human being, not being able to cope with his problem in correlation with his anticipation, falls short in long-term planning, and thus completely misses his higher calling as a 'responsible' person. These decisions of expediency reflect themselves in the confusion and lack of directives that a viable society needs for objective, long-term results.

At this time may I come to the main point of my address: the "Responsible Society" as I envision it. The society where elected representatives of the people, will work in close co-operation with the entrepreneurship or the creative element of our society for the overall good of the people.

As one who has in his time, done nearly every type of work in Canada, I know how easy it is to say this, but how difficult it is to achieve. But, it is my firm belief that those who are imbued with the initiative, and are aware of their responsibility, must be given the chance to express themselves and be left to create.

Growth of the Canadian economy is, to a significant extent, attributable to a relatively small group of enterprising individuals. For them to create, they must have the environment created by the public sector of our economy, conducive to their own stimulus: their relation with labour-management problem, and finally, their relation with the elected bodies or the governments of our country. Therefore, I would say that taxes must be fair and equitable. Our labour-management area must be completely re-examined, and the close co-operation of the government and the private entrepreneurship of our society must be established.

We have witnessed over the period of last years, criticism that our industries are losing Canadian bases. Yet, we are doing everything possible to make sure that the trend will continue. Individuals who have created large corporate operations are often forced to liquidate their holdings to provide funds required for death duties. As death duties are designed to minimize accululation of wealth by Canadians, they seriously diminish the potential market and, accordingly, Canadian businesses are often sold to foreign interests, either because this is the only available market, or because a higher price can be secured.

In effect, death duties negate the primary driving force of free enterprise, and free enterprise is the foundation on which Canada must build.

Therefore, why not eliminate Sussession Duty Taxes. I realize in saying this, I am putting myself up for criticism as one having an axe to grind. However, my reason for taking this position is more than personal. I believe that the benefits gained from the flow of permanent capital from other countries will be far greater than the taxes which the government presently collects from this particular field.

Another way to accomplish this is to bring senior capital into the country without restrictive taxation on its earnings, with majority of equity to be held by Canadians. The result that will accrue to the country, after the initial capital is paid off to its original investors, will be the beginning of establishing Canadian controlled industries.

The third tax incentive for a country like Canada is to keep present arrangements with non-taxing of capital gains. Risk capital in Canada is needed in the worst way: to participate, with public funds in opening our under-developed areas of the country. Non-taxing of capital gains will again stimulate more and more Canadians to take a risk and bet on the future of their country.

Now these three fields are just some of the many ways in which incentive could be put to work to produce long-term results that will benefit all Canadians.

In the free world we are witnessing encroachment of the union on the rights of management. We are witnessing, under the argument of progress, labours' selfish and irresponsible approach to management of our industries. And, I would like to say, without going into any more detail, that in our present arrangements, and in our present relation between labour and capital, labour's only concern should be the proper remuneration for its effort, and no interference with management.

But, can we defend our society and our civilization within its present environment, against the forces that are anti-management and non-democratic? I would say "No" and, therefore, it brings me to the next point: to express my idea of "Responsible Society".

I will summarize this next point as follows. For our society to be viable in the future, and be able to compete in the world, we would have to make the unit that is most important to production and productivity, self-motivating, and more interested in the end result of its effort. In other words, the human unit should be more involved in overall concept of production, management and competition. I feel that the society which realizes the importance of that particular approach to production will be the society that will survive, and flourish at the end.

Under stress that our world experiences I feel that the partnership between management and labour is the salvation of our society, and the salvation of our capitalistic system. By participating in the end result of management and labours' combined endeavours, labour will become more responsible, and a stronger defender of our free system. If productivity would be the criterion by which labour would be rewarded, labour would thus become a self-supervising element of production; a self-motivating factor, and thus better results, better profits will be accomplished.

Equation between productivity and remuneration again, in my opinion, should be our order of the day for tomorrow. And, why am I thinking this way? Because I feel that the particular deterrent to our competitive position, in the world, will be the imbalance between the productivity and remuneration. And it must be obvious to you, gentlemen, that as a person becomes more educated and more evolved, it is harder and harder for him to be interested in production where he can participate only at the very low level of involvement. On the other hand, getting the man to see his production to the ultimate end, or use, and participating in the stages of industrial and corporate evolution, the man will become more interested; more involved, and a better supervisory and motivating factor for his own environment.

Therefore, as you can see, I feel that the second troublesome factor our society should undertake is the complete partnership of production for productivity.

I feel that in our immediate future, and in the long-range future of our country, our free and peaceful society can only continue if the present arrangements between labour and management are replaced by a complete partnership, where both sides share in the responsibility for production. I believe that our present labour-management arrangements must be replaced by some system of minimum wage plus compensation commensurate with effort.

It is my firm opinion that as long as our system has two warring factors - labour and management - we will not be able to achieve complete and full peaceful evolution of our system. I, for one, completely disagree with some of today's economists who seem to think that the economic growth and constant rise in personal income can be achieved in our present day society. Higher wages and low productivity are, in themselves, self-destroying. The achievement of our national purpose will be self-defeating, because as people become more educated they become increasingly unhappy with the quality of work, unless they can equate it to the ultimate goal of their immediate surroundings. This dissatisfaction is evident, especially among many young people who find life very bleak despite all the material rewards.

Only in this kind of arrangements between management and labour can labour claim any part of the supervisory responsibility for its members; and, only in this kind of arrangement can labour participate in management.

Let me emphasize that I do not believe that this can be accomplished by legislation - but only by free negotiations between management and labour, within the frame-work of fullest government co-operation.

I am sure that most of us here today, don't agree with the feeling of some political thinkers of our society, that a new substantial political force must come around to take away the privilege of economic decision

from the corporate management, in order to achieve some one's preconceived idea of a good life. But, I do believe that unless, in view of better education and evolvement of the human being, our system can adjust to take these factors into consideration, we will lose to a destructive force that, although it will not offer any high ideal as alternative, will defeat our society by public ignorance of its goals.

The third factor towards the "responsible society" is the co-operation of government and the creative forces in our society.

We do see that the older civilizations started to deteriorate when the government, or elected representatives of the people, got together with the masses against the third element of the society. The creative element was used as a 'whipping boy' for the ills in society. The most obvious example of this lies in old Rome when the politicians provided the 'bread and circuses' for the masses hoping to perpetuate themselves in power.

I feel that the initiative has more meaning in our society because without it, it would not have an opportunity to express itself. Being thus a communal force, so to speak, reflecting itself by very small portion of our society, I feel that our overall purpose must be directed to bring about very close co-operation, and working together between our elected representatives and creative part of our society, for the ultimate good of the people. Any other arrangements can only lead to

deterioration and decadance. The responsibility must be encouraged and built, whether in its high and intensive form, or as we see today, in re-educating those that were not productive part of our society. Only an idealistic purpose of bringing the government and the entrepreneurship together can we produce the type of society that will eliminate indifference, decadance and irresponsibility.

To-day's democracy, being democratic in form rather than in contents and spirit, is destroying more and more incentive, quality of the spirit, and even the greatness in our society, in favour of mediocrity and empty forms.

The "Responsible Society" will show the world the path by which all the factors of our society could work towards one goal: the freedom of the world, and the well-being of the individual.

At the beginning of this talk, I told you that I was going to seize on a controversial subject. It is controversial today to talk, not about the rights of the group, but about the need to develop the initiative and responsibility of the individual. It is controversial to talk, not about the need to legislate morality, but the need to re-awaken the moral obligations and standards of the individual.

Let's make it then, not the government and the masses for expedient political benefit, but the government and the creative element for the good of all peoples.

I believe very strongly in what I have said today. I believe we can meet the challenges which faces us. I believe we can achieve a "Responsible Society". And I, particularly, appreciate this opportunity to have expressed my beliefs to you today.

Thank you, Gentlemen.

