

A CANADIAN'S RESPONSIBILITY

In general, people tend to be lulled into a false sense of security about many things. It is the opinion of many Canadian intellectuals that this situation exists in Canada with regard to our system of state welfarism. Usually welfarism is referred to as planned or regulated capitalism; this is quite different from theoretical capitalism which is free from planning or regulation.

Canada, as a welfare state, realizes that not all her citizens are capable, nor have they the opportunity, to earn what is necessary for subsistence; and, being aware of the situation she attempts to alleviate it by giving financial aid in the form of family allowances, unemployment insurance, etc. The immediate effects of these measures are usually good; however, the future effects may be detrimental to the common good of the Canadian public.

It is probable that if consideration were given to the following questions the Canadian public would become at least vaguely aware of the adverse effects that this system could eventually have on our nation: (1) What amount of control over the populace could welfarism eventually give to the government? (2) Is it possible for the government to reduce these measures of welfarism? (3) Considered subjectively does this plan have any adverse effects on the populace?

Regarding the first question, which deals with state control of the populace, let us study for a moment the following figures which illustrate how much of the total national income has gone to taxes over the years:

1930.....	19%
1940.....	33%
1958.....	35%

If this trend continues the state will be taking an increasing portion of our income every year in the form of taxes; the state must necessarily do this, however, in order to keep pace with the demands of the people for more and more welfare measures. Eventually the public could become almost completely dependent on the government financially, and the state would, as a result, have almost complete control over the affairs of the public. This conclusion is logical because the power controlling the finances in any society usually controls all other matters. To put it bluntly the Canadian people could become slaves to the state and they would have little or no control over their own affairs as a political entity or as individuals. These considerations lead up to the next question which regards the possible means of reducing the amount of state welfarism, or at least curbing its increase.

In answer to this, our political parties would say that it is not feasible for them to reduce or curb welfarism as the situation now stands. The political parties compete with each other in offering

more welfare measures each time that they go to the people for a mandate to govern, and if one party has more than the other to offer along this line then the people will vote for this party. Another factor to be considered is that the public has come to consider welfarism almost as a human right. As the situation is now, we are involved in a vicious circle of increasing welfare measures caused mainly by the actions of uninformed citizens voting for political parties that are involved in competition for these votes which are the key to governing power.

The third question deals with the effects that this system of welfarism has on the populace considered subjectively. Welfarism tends to take away the initiative of the people, who become so dependent on the state for the satisfaction of their wants that they do not try to accomplish anything for themselves. Eventually we would find our nation peopled by a class of loafing welfare dependents, and as a result of this our country would deteriorate to that state where it could be easily controlled and exploited by a dictatorial government or fall victim to some foreign power.

It may be thought that the situation has been exaggerated here. But if the facts are studied it will be realized that the time has arrived for Canadians to put restrictions on this trend towards welfarism. One way to do this is to instill in the people a knowledge of just what state welfarism is and what it could lead to eventually. Now is the time to awaken from this lethargic trance if we are to protect the heritage that has been given to us by our fore-fathers. The onus is upon us, primarily as Canadians, and secondly as university students, to do this.

—EDWARD MURPHY '59

If there is any truth brought home to us by conscience, it is this, that we are personally responsible for what we do, that we have no means of shifting our responsibility, and that the dereliction of duty involves punishment.

—Cardinal Newman

This, above all, to thy own self be true
And it will follow, as the night the day
Thou canst not then be false to any man

—Shakespeare