



Perspective

Progress Must Have Meaning in a Total Sense

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THE WORD "PROGRESS" has little meaning today unless it is applied in a total sense. It is obvious, for example, that even if health campaigns are carried out successfully in a community, they do not promote social progress merely by restoring the health and the working capacity of a number of its members.

There has been no social progress if the physically rehabilitated people merely swell the ranks of the unemployed, dissatisfied, or hungry.

The extra labor gained through such campaigns will mean progress only if the people freed from disease are assured of capital investment for production and stabilized markets for distribution, if they are thus guaranteed sufficient work and, in addition, given adequate educational and cultural facilities for themselves and their children.

On the other hand, neither investment of capital nor improvement of agricultural methods will lead to increased productivity in an underdeveloped country unless adequate measures are taken to raise the health standards of the people to a degree which will allow them to work efficiently in both agriculture and industry.

Despite occasional upsurges of international concern for the social and economic well-being of the underprivileged populations of the world—and I am thinking of Point IV, the Colombo Plan, the UN technical assistance program, etc.—the nations of the world have, in their search for security, reverted to techniques and methods which the evolution of technology and science has made entirely obsolete.

We are caught in a vicious circle which, if unbroken, cannot but result in the destruction of our civilization. On the one hand, we know and constantly proclaim that the more fortu-

nate nations must be ready to invest an important part of their resources to banish the fear of war—which sooner or later may well lead to war—caused primarily by economic and social insecurity prevailing in the larger part of the world.

On the other hand, it is precisely the fear of war which prevents many governments from embarking upon the economic rehabilitation of the underdeveloped areas.

The glaring contrast between the tremendous sacrifices we are forced to make for piling up instruments of war and destruction and the insignificant amount of energy and money we spend for constructive purposes is symbolic of the challenge modern man is facing.

This is a challenge which is without precedent in history. Man must now learn to live with himself and to get along with all others in a world in which the dimensions and perspectives have radically changed from those of the past.

For this generation there is no sane alternative but to accept with courage and determination the realities of a new era.

The time for courage, determination, and action—even, it may be, for martyrdom—is now; the place is here, wherever we may be and whatever our responsibilities at the moment. Every action, every word works for, or against, the great ideal of peace on earth.

We, the people of the world, not only in the councils of the nations, but far more importantly, in our daily living, will decide whether we and our children shall live and die in misery and fear far worse than anything we have known, or whether we and they can construct and enjoy a happy and peaceful world community.

(From an address by Dr. Chisholm before the Sixth World Health Assembly)