

On the other side of this, let me say that we have not seen this as yet in our data on productivity. We have not had the dramatic upward change of direction in the curves of productivity that some of this would imply. I rather suspect we will begin to see it more visibly in the immediate years ahead. But you can get some feeling of it by looking backward just a bit.

In the last 15 years our agricultural production has gone up 10 percent and the number of people working on the farms has gone down 25 percent. If we go still further back we see that this is simply a projection of earlier trends. In the last 15 years in manufacturing our production has gone up 30 percent--these are rounded figures--and the number of jobs have remained about stable. There have been very few jobs added in manufacturing and a diminution of jobs in agriculture. There has been an increase in service jobs and in government jobs, but some close observers are beginning to wonder whether this technology is not finding increasingly frequent opportunities of application in the service fields.

Another way of putting this and comparing this situation with the one that existed in the first industrial revolution: At that time the application of steam power enhanced the muscle power of man. Today the application of our new technology is not only enhancing the muscle power of man at accelerating rates but is enhancing his mental power as well.

The startling consequence, when we reflect about it, that has such puzzling implications is that we are rapidly approaching an affluent society. This is not true throughout the world. I am talking primarily about the conditions that exist in this country and, with gradations of degree, that are beginning to show up in some other parts of the world.

We are certainly approaching a different society as well as an affluent society. One author recently characterized it as a massive shift from the blue-collar, manual worker to white-collar services, from man-hours to computer seconds, from saving to spending. This is the dynamo of the economy, a shift that turns the theories of Ricardo upside-down.

To make this thing still more complicated in our time we have some strange things happening in demography. This would be a hard