

*Disabled Persons Act*

Security Association in its "Report on the Activities of the Working Group on Harmonizing the Criteria for the Evaluation of Invalidity" published in its bulletin of October, 1962, recognizes several elements posed by the complex problem of invalidity evaluation. I believe most hon. members will find this report helpful to them in studying this problem and in seeing how social agencies of various countries are working zealously to harmonize the criteria upon which a medical review board can call a person permanently and totally disabled.

For the record, and so far as my own province of Ontario is concerned, I would like to state that the disabled persons allowances act of Ontario, dated 1955, states in its regulation (4) that an advisory board is to be established "consisting of three persons, of whom at least one shall be a duly qualified medical practitioner" and in regulation (2) that the "chairman of the advisory board shall be a duly qualified medical practitioner." Furthermore the regulations state:

The advisory board shall assist the director in determining eligibility of applicants by

(a) reviewing medical evidence submitted in support of the application,

(b) obtaining any additional necessary evidence, and

(c) furnishing to the director a report on the evidence with a specific finding as to whether or not the applicant is totally and permanently disabled as prescribed by the regulations under the Disabled Persons Act (Canada).

This board is not a static thing. It meets from time to time to discuss definitions of chronic illnesses, to bring up to date the evidence of medical research so far as certain chronic illnesses are concerned, and what is available in the field of rehabilitation to return these people to an active way of living.

Further this board reviews medical statistics and I should like to point out that in the year April 1960 to March 1961, in which, in the 10 provinces of Canada, 6,448 cases were approved, the greatest percentage of the disabled were found in the category of mental, psychoneurotic and personality disorders. This group consisted of 2,164 disabled persons, or 33.6 per cent of the total for that year. This group contained not only cases of mental deficiency, such as those we call mentally retarded, but also schizophrenic disorders and other personality diseases.

The second group was the group called diseases of the nervous system and sense organs, and consisted of 20.3 per cent of the total, or 1,306 out of the 6,448. This category

[Mr. Haidasz.]

consisted of epileptics, spastics suffering from cerebral paralysis, cerebral embolism and thrombosis, multiple sclerosis, cerebral spastic infantile paralysis, and other disabilities.

The third group consisted of persons afflicted with diseases of the circulatory system and these formed 17.9 per cent of the total, or 1,154 cases. They included arteriosclerotic and degenerative heart cases, hypertensive disease not otherwise reported, other and unspecified diseases of the heart and chronic rheumatic heart disease. This was followed by a category called "diseases of the bones and organs of movement", which cases formed 7.7 per cent of the total. These were people suffering from rheumatoid arthritis and allied conditions, osteoarthritis and similar disabilities. A further group consisted of people suffering from terminal stages of cancer. Some of these cases dragged out for many months, even years. They accounted for 5 per cent of the total, or 322 cases.

Next in line came the allergic, endocrine system, metabolic and nutritional diseases. These diseases included diabetes mellitus. The next group covered infective and parasitic diseases; and the next group consisted of diseases of the respiratory system including bronchitis and other diseases which render a person chronically and totally disabled.

As I have mentioned, I believe our efforts should be directed towards rehabilitation. The government should be congratulated for having taken steps last year to help the agencies which are working in this field. I think we should not only help the disabled to obtain pensions with greater facility; we should make it possible for them to enjoy life—to pass measures to put them on their feet again, and even give them an opportunity of earning a living.

[Translation]

**Mr. Rémi Paul (Berthier-Maskinongé-De-lanaudière):** Mr. Speaker, allow me to congratulate the sponsor of this motion who put forward the true reasons why he submitted this recommendation to the government for consideration so that amendments could be made to the Disabled Persons Act in order to extend its benefits to a greater number of persons, not because they are ill, but rather because they are permanently unfit for work.

The hon. member for Parkdale (Mr. Haidasz) is against this resolution as a matter of principle—

**Mr. Haidasz:** On the contrary.