

governments, stimulation of research, the study of aspects of employment of older workers, and the development and implementation of a national educational and publicity program. The problem, of course, is a consequence of the changing world population pattern. As the world's population gets older the work force gets older too. At the same time the rapid change in technology makes a much greater number of jobs become redundant, and the difficulty in getting back into the labour market is intensified. However, it is during the latter period of their working life that most people do their best work; they are at their peak of performance and earning power. But, unfortunately, when they become unemployed during that period they have much more difficulty getting back into the labour market.

We know some of the causes, but too many of these are rooted in prejudice and wrong information. There is prejudice in favour of youth, misconceptions regarding capabilities of older persons, tendencies to generalize about health and the capacity of older people, the widely held view these people cannot re-learn once they have been away from the school system for any length of time, that unfortunately with changes in technology certain skills become obsolete. There is the factor of group insurance and pension plans, and the problems of promotion and the promotional system which means that most vacancies occur at the bottom, and many other things add to the difficulties these people encounter.

We in the Department of Labour are conscious of all the problems that are faced by the older segment of the population, but we feel very definitely that most of the problems of aging with which we are all concerned—such as housing, health and recreation—would be greatly lessened if a higher percentage of our people approached retirement following a period of steady employment. Actually, over 20 per cent of all Canadians qualify for old age assistance on a means tests basis when they reach 65. This certainly indicates the population just before this is not being used to the extent that it is possible. Obviously, the person that has the money to take care of his health problem, that has the means of getting the type of accommodation he wants or money in his pocket to go for a bus ride or to go to a show, is not as direly in need of some of the services we have talked about as the individual depending only on his public assistance.

Senator GROSART: You said 20 per cent nationally qualify? You do not mean only 20 per cent could qualify?

Mr. CAMPBELL: I do not know.

Senator GROSART: You mean 20 per cent have qualified?

Mr. CAMPBELL: Twenty per cent of the population in the age group 65 to 69.

Senator GROSART: —are willing to take the means test?

Mr. CAMPBELL: Yes.

This problem is of international concern. One of the jobs of this division is to keep in touch with what is happening throughout the world. We are in touch with the International Labour Office and various divisions of the United Nations, the World Health Organization, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. As we obtain information we make it available to anyone in Canada we think might benefit from it or who might be interested. This is becoming one of our major functions. Last year we had requests for over 10,000 pieces of material from various parts of Canada.

We are doing a service in disseminating information regarding the problem. The Department of Labour has been concerned with this problem since the last war, and has become increasingly aware of it as time has gone on.