

Economic Rehabilitation

the movement of people was elsewhere, nevertheless I should like to put on the record that both in vocational training and in the national employment service the federal department co-operated very fully as well.

In Alberta in 1934 authority was provided, through action of the legislature, for the expenditure of an amount not to exceed a total of \$100,000 for any purpose whatsoever to assist in the rehabilitation of coal miners who had become unemployed in areas designated by the lieutenant governor in council. A miners' rehabilitation committee was set up and it was decided by that committee that all the people would have to be moved out. The committee made arrangements for a complete on-the-spot investigation of the situation and it found that in all there were over 800 workers, most of them heads of families, who were affected. It was decided that placements would be made under the rehabilitation program with the co-operation of the national employment service, and that is where our federal activities in that field came into the picture. It was decided that the possibilities of retraining under Canadian vocational training and apprenticeship legislation should be investigated and that travel warrants chargeable to the provincial appropriation should be issued, where necessary, to transport workers and their families to areas where other work could be provided.

I will agree with the hon. member for Cape Breton South that that set-up, in a time of very great need for the communities concerned, worked very well indeed. Through the efforts of the joint committee, the unemployment service and others a very high percentage of the coal miners who were unemployed in those towns were relocated in other mining areas where they could be employed or were placed in other suitable forms of employment or were given training for other activities. There were some remaining problems, particularly amongst the older workers, and that will always arise in any such attempt to move people or to retrain them for other activities. It is found very difficult to move and place people in the age category from 45 up. However, by and large the effort was successful and the satisfactory result obtained in Alberta is, I think, a very good example of what can be done by close co-operation. It was an ad hoc effort and required a special act of the provincial legislature to put it into effect.

I turn now from the question of moving a whole community from one area to another to the question of another type of community, one with increasing opportunities for work in the same general area, a community where an industry closes down for good but where in the general area other things are coming

into operation. That of course, is what the hon. member who sponsored the resolution hoped might be done either by chance or by government intervention wherever people are thrown out of work.

I am going to take an example of this category in my own province of New Brunswick. In the town of Marysville there had been a large cotton mill there for 80 years, and two years ago last February it closed down for good. At the time of closing about 400 persons were employed in the mill. There had been more than that but that was the approximate number at the time of closing. It was a great tragedy for the town of Marysville which depended almost entirely upon the cotton mill. There were some people who were retired and some who lived in Marysville but worked in the city of Fredericton. Nevertheless the closing of the mill meant that the situation was going to be very difficult for those who had worked there and for the town itself.

The two ministers of labour, the minister of labour for the province and the federal Minister of Labour, met, discussed the matter and agreed to co-operate to the fullest extent. That co-operation was carried out and under the vocational training agreement with the province of New Brunswick a committee was set up. That committee interviewed 250 persons and recommended 118 out of that number for training in 17 different occupations. While that was taking place the national employment office in Fredericton was carrying on a special drive for the placement of those who did not want or did not need to take training. Included in the latter were some who had worked in the offices, some who had worked in the factory itself, some who had worked on maintenance, some who had semi-skills, and it was reasonably easy to find placement for them, although I will admit that the problem arose at a time when employment there was not nearly as buoyant as it is in central New Brunswick or in Canada as a whole at the present time.

I should like to acknowledge the way in which a good many other employers took a keen interest in those who were unemployed in the town of Marysville and found work for them. I should like to mention those who were given special training. Temporary training facilities were established by the provincial government with the assistance of the federal government for the purpose of assisting those who wished to take training. Training was carried out