

Vocational Rehabilitation

costs of a larger, more comprehensive and more efficient kind of rehabilitation program, the government is assured of the support of this group. It is assured of that support for humanitarian reasons, of course. In a civilized country, a western democracy, we can do nothing else but do everything in our power to help those who through some misfortune have lost a limb, an eye or have been disabled in some other way. It is not charity. In a sense, it is merely enlightened self-interest.

I was interested in the statistics of the Department of Labour with regard to a group of disabled workmen who were rehabilitated. It was found that whereas previously only 41 were earning over \$2,000 per annum, after rehabilitation over 720 were earning over \$2,000 a year.

Only 107 of a given group were earning between \$1,000 and \$2,000 a year. There were 369 after rehabilitation. In other words, there was a considerable rise in the productivity of the individual, in his ability to support himself.

In a sense, what we are doing in passing a resolution of this kind is not really giving charity but simply indicating our interest, and indeed our self-interest, that these people will be able to play a real part in the economy of our nation.

Certainly we can give money to support them, but how much better it is to give them a means of contributing to the society in which they live. A change is indicated even in the kind of work these people are able to undertake. Whereas before rehabilitation only 39 were able to carry out what can be considered professional or managerial occupations, the figure rose to 123 after rehabilitation. The unskilled occupations of course went down from 215 to 94. These men were able to make perhaps an even greater contribution to the economy, as well as being able to support themselves.

Therefore I do not think the effect of vocational rehabilitation can be seriously questioned. However, we do need greater organization. The remarks of the Minister of Labour in introducing his resolution lead me to believe that the national government will give greater leadership to the provincial governments. It will co-ordinate the work of the Department of Health and Welfare, the Department of Labour and the Department of Veterans Affairs, the polio foundation, the Canadian National Institute for the Blind and a great many agencies which are working in this area of vocational rehabilitation.

Unfortunately it could be suggested that in the past there has been too much overlapping; that too many people have been collecting funds and the cost of collecting those funds

[Mr. Pitman.]

has in itself cancelled out the benefit, in a sense, because of course the costs of administration rise as you get several groups trying to obtain the same charity dollar from the individual Canadian. We hope that this overlapping, which has in the past been a disadvantage to rehabilitation, will be eliminated through the implementation of this resolution, and enable a real advancement to be made toward more effective action on the part of these agencies. We know this is essentially a provincial responsibility, but we are beginning to realize—and I hope we have already realized—that there are many things which are outside the resources of the provincial governments.

I hope this resolution will do something in the direction of assuring that those provinces which are less affluent will gain more money and greater opportunities.

We on this side of the house have been rather concerned about the darkening picture of dominion-provincial relations since this government took office. We are a little concerned that we are going back, as one provincial premier said, to the jungle of the 1930's and the 1940's. We certainly hope that equality of opportunity will still be the hallmark of this particular resolution, even if in other areas it appears that the government is going in other directions.

We hope that this equalization will not be eroded, to use a favourite word of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fleming), any more than it has been by what has happened here in Ottawa in the last three months.

Part of this resolution deals with research in vocational rehabilitation. Job requirements are changing, and it may very well be that the activity in the area of automation will help the problem of those who are disabled and need vocational rehabilitation. As the activities in the physical sense decrease and the areas of mental excellence increase, the physically disabled will certainly have an advantage over what they now have.

However, I am concerned, and I am concerned as much in this area as I am in any other, that this government does not fully recognize what is going to happen. I am concerned that there will not be sufficient research into the whole strata of jobs, where industry is going, what industries are going to play a greater part in the Canadian economy, and what jobs are going to disappear over the next 10 or 20 years as a result of automation.

I hope that when these resolutions are put into effect we will not train disabled people, any more than we will train people who are able to carry on normal job activities, for jobs which will be obsolete within the next five, six or 10 years.