

Social Security

the number of cases of disabilities and permanently unemployable can be learned by the minister's department, let us place those people in the welfare group, and get on with what is suggested in the resolution, so that no longer will we see these people selling pencils on street corners and tolerated by the police only because they are crippled.

We could go further than that. I believe this group is just as important to the house as is the old age group; certainly we have been very slack in dealing with invalids, with those who have suffered these afflictions, and we should begin today to do something about it.

Mr. Robert Fair (Battle River): Mr. Speaker, I wish to say only a few words in support of the resolution moved for the second time by the hon. member for Terrebonne (Mr. Bertrand). On other occasions I have raised the matter, and I shall be very happy indeed to do anything to help at this time.

We must not be told now, as we have been in the past, that we have not the money to take care of these people. In the near future we shall be asked to make provision for between five and six billions of dollars for the purpose of destroying and crippling people in other countries, and perhaps in our own. Let us spend at least a portion of that amount to take care of those in our own country who cannot take care of themselves.

I speak at this time because, like many other members, from time to time I receive letters from people in my constituency who are physically incapacitated. Up to the present time my replies have not satisfied me, and I am sure they have not satisfied them. Many of us who have full use of our limbs and senses are finding it difficult to make a living; we should be able easily to picture the task faced by those who are physically incapacitated. I shall support the resolution, and I offer my congratulations to the mover.

Hon. W. Earl Rowe (Dufferin-Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, it is unusual to find, as in this case, unanimity on any issue in the House of Commons. This afternoon I am impelled to say a few words in support of the resolution. In doing so I shall not take much time of the house, because I am in agreement with what has been stated by men in the medical profession who have spoken, the hon. members for Portneuf (Mr. Gauthier) and Lanark (Mr. Blair), each of whom has studied this social problem for many years.

It seems to me that our common interest in the resolution should prevent its being talked out this afternoon. I often think that in our democratic form of government on

many occasions we put first things last, and last things first. Already in Canada we have an extensive social security program. The unanimity expressed in respect of this resolution is a further indication of that human sympathy aroused in each of us from our respective districts, each of whom has seen pitiful cases such as have been described today. It seems to me that these crippled and maimed people should have been looked after long ago, even before other social security measures were instituted. Not only have crippled children and other handicapped people in our society suffered, but they have been a source of embarrassment to their families and a charge against the good friendship of neighbours. Many times the support they have received has been meagre, and those charged with that support have found difficulty in maintaining their families.

Aside from political considerations altogether, I say this is a reflection upon our country. We have clamoured for those kinds of security which would find popular appeal, have given security to the many and have neglected the few. While this may have been an oversight, I have felt for many years that the condition should be rectified. Within the knowledge of all in this chamber today there are cases where the nature of the handicap has been such that the families have not had the money to give the necessary relief and treatment. There has not been sufficient money to give even that degree of care which would give comfort to those suffering.

I find myself in full support of the resolution, and I note with pride the unanimity of feeling among hon. members who have spoken. I have no doubt further that those who have not spoken will share in that spirit of human sympathy so that we may join in a common effort to see that the suggestion in the resolution is made effective.

I do not often speak at length in the house, because I feel that on many occasions the time of parliament is wasted. However, if we are sincere in what we say, and if we are not just talking to please those who are handicapped, then I am sure we will see to it that the resolution is not talked out and that effect will be given to it. While the application of the suggestion in the resolution may not have as broad application as in some other types of social legislation, it would serve to satisfy many anxious and deserving people.

Canada is a great country; we are a strong, rich and virile nation, and we should be ashamed of ourselves if we are content to give security to the strong and fail to provide for those who are handicapped and who,