

Vocational Rehabilitation

in the field of vocational rehabilitation and to undertake research in respect of vocational rehabilitation. Then it goes on to authorize the establishment of a national advisory council on the rehabilitation of disabled persons.

With all of these things I am in full accord, as is every other hon. member in this committee. But, Mr. Chairman, these are now fields of action in which the Minister of Labour is authorized to act. I think it should be clear that we are not today embarking upon a new principle of action nor are we establishing a new initiative on the part of the government of this country. The reason I mention this matter is that it seems to me that much of the legislation that has come before the House of Commons this session is of a pattern that is open to an interpretation not really warranted by that pattern or by the incidence of the legislation that constitutes that pattern.

Unless there is a careful explanation of of what we are now doing, I fear that it will be open to the propagandists of the minister's party—I do not say to the Minister of Labour—to indicate that in this session of parliament something new has taken place, namely that the government brought forward an act to provide for the vocational rehabilitation of disabled persons. That will be in keeping with the façade which I believe attends some legislation already presented in the house such as that respecting the productivity council, the small business legislation and the vocational training act. Those three measures and this one, put in a pamphlet well adorned, carefully written and properly caricatured, can be very effective ammunition on the part of anyone who is so imaginative. I am not suggesting that the Minister of Labour is not imaginative. However, I know that he uses his great qualities of imagination for more laudable purposes. Unless someone gives the proper perspective to this resolution, I greatly fear that the very kind of thing which I apprehend is going to happen.

As I say, what we are being asked to do in this committee today is to give the Minister of Labour powers that he already is given by parliament by an annual vote that is provided for in the estimates with regard to vocational rehabilitation. We already have a council. There is in existence now and serving with great distinction in the Department of Labour a director of vocational rehabilitation in the person of Mr. Ian Campbell, one of the most accomplished men in this field in the country. But he has been at work now for almost a decade doing this very thing, providing for this very kind of assistance to individuals in the country in co-operation with the provinces.

I think it is clear that we should have a proper appreciation of exactly what we are doing. As I listened to the hon. member for Kootenay West in the very appropriate remarks he made when he expressed his philosophy with regard to these matters, I had the impression that he had been taken in or that he was under the impression that he was now being called upon to support something that was not already part of the authority of government in this country.

Mr. Herridge: I mentioned that matter.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): When the hon. member for Peterborough spoke—and there is more excuse for his making this error—one had the impression that he was rising in his place in order to support a new project never before conceived by this House of Commons. However, the Minister of Labour—and I will be fair to him—did not use in the middle of his speech words that would warrant the error which I suspect the hon. member for Peterborough unwittingly fell into. At page 2990 of *Hansard* the Minister of Labour is reported as having said:

The passing of this legislation will not commit the federal government to any new areas of expenditure.

That is true. As a result of the passing of this resolution and the bill that will be passed later in connection with it, not one additional cent of expenditure will be authorized by parliament, nor is the government asking for any more money.

The Minister of Labour then put the matter in proper perspective when he went on to say:

The placing of the authority for the program in statute form will encourage the provinces to plan ahead in developing more effective vocational rehabilitation services.

That is what really should have been in the explanatory part of the resolution. That is what we are really being asked to do. We are not being asked to provide for a program of vocational rehabilitation; we are being asked to put in statute form something that is now part of the law of this country. That is all we are being asked to do.

We might well ask the minister for his reasons for wanting to put in statute form something that is now available by an annual vote in the estimates, as has been the practice with regard to this and companion measures over a period of at least 10 or 12 years.

I know that hon. gentlemen opposite have always taken the position with regard to these social and health measures that the proper way to provide for authorization is by way of statute and not annual vote. When the national health grants were brought down