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then there is a major difference and I do take issue with that idea.

I do believe that one should not be judged by one's geographical location, and if there be exclusions, monopolies or restrictions put on people because of sex, age, or because they live in another location; I do not think this country is formed purely by geographical boundaries. Clearly, one of the problems we have faced in Canada, whether it is in training or employment programs, has been discrimination based upon sex, race or ethnic background. Those are the discriminations which we think must be overcome if we are to provide for full mobility, not just in a geographical sense across Canada but also in a vertical sense so that people can move into occupations that have been denied to them in the work place.

The hon. member's colleague from Kingston has rightly argued that for generations women have been denied proper opportunity for access to a full range of jobs and proper pay. Slowly, that is a recognition which this country is reaching. We have denied equal opportunity to 51 per cent of the people in Canada.

We, the government, declared in our throne speech that we want to end that discrimination. It will take time. It will not happen in the miraculous fashion which the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands prescribes, even though she and her government did not do much about it when they were in office. But that is history. Nevertheless, it will take some time and it will take some effort, but we are committed to that principle. We want to see it implemented, but we cannot implement it if the contrary policy, put forward by certain provincial governments, as the hon. member proposes, does not even recognize that there is that kind of discrimination. They say there cannot be discrimination because theirs is a province where discrimination does not exist. By the stroke of a pen they eliminate it, even though it is a very real factor.

● (1850)

I suggest the hon. member read some of the court cases brought by Indian bands in his province against his provincial government on the affirmative action question of resource projects. If he read those court statements and briefs submitted by the native bands, he would see how wrong is the decision of his province. It has served to deny many native people in that province opportunity to those resource projects. If that is the discrimination he is talking about, I am prepared to say those governments are wrong. The approach we take is to promote equal opportunity of people, geographically, between sexes, races and backgrounds, is the right one and we intend to continue promoting it.

Mr. Hawkes: I bring to the minister's attention the statutes of the province of Alberta. Here is our human rights act. It had a lot more force in law than anything his government has done in the past 17 years to protect the rights of individuals. I come back to the theme. The minister has a habit which is well known in this House. When he does not have a knowledge base, he talks about something other than the question which has been asked. I specifically asked the minister how many

dollars in the estimates before us within his Canada Manpower centres are devoted to the placement of handicapped people.

Mr. Axworthy: Again, Mr. Chairman, this is information we will attempt to find out. It really is such a niggardly request that it defies description, that you can separate out of the amount of estimates that amount allocated to one group of people. Our employment centres provide multi-regional services for a wide variety of people. When someone comes to them, the counsellor does not say, "Because you are not handicapped, I cannot serve you". They serve people of all kinds, descriptions and needs, every day in the placements they make. The number this year was close to a million registrations.

We do not ask people what their background is. We do not deny them access. Nor do we say we have a special allocation, that counselling or placement service is pigeonholed for only one group of people. If we did that, the first to scream about an inefficient operation would be members opposite. They would say there are rows and rows of counters with people waiting for someone to walk in the door.

We have tried to provide programs to aid and assist those with handicaps. We provided a major program of changing the physical facilities within our employment offices to ensure easier access. We established an affirmative action program. Part of the group which will get more equal opportunity are those who are handicapped. In a short period of time we will be announcing a special employment program geared specifically to those with handicaps. We are trying to target where it is needed.

It is really not possible to respond to the question the hon. member asks. Frankly, just to save a lot more time, I will tell him that we will not try to find out exactly how much. However, we will tell the hon. member how much we spend on employment programs, training and placements, what we do in terms of Outreach programs, all of which are designed to help different groups of people. We will not try to do a time value study as to what one of our employment counsellors in an office in Swift Current spends percentage-wise dealing with people with handicaps simply to satisfy the curious curiosity of the hon. member opposite.

Mr. Hawkes: Mr. Chairman, that reply speaks to something pretty troublesome. I think the information available in the world will tell us very clearly that there is a proportion of the population in Canada which has extreme difficulty in becoming employed. There is a lot of research evidence which indicates that resources specifically allocated to those who are strongly disadvantaged are in fact paying off for individuals and for society. Whether the minister knows it or not, he has been touching on the major philosophical difference between employment services run in the state of California and most Canadian provinces and those run by the Canada Employment Centre.

It seems logical that resources specifically designated in at least our larger communities to assist physically handicapped