

Vocational Rehabilitation

that organization. The book goes on to mention that there are plans for the establishment of three demonstration centres in different parts of the world in respect of the rehabilitation of disabled persons. The program is outlined and should be of interest to hon. members. The salient points are as follows:

1. Joint planning with the specialized agencies and in consultation with the interested non-governmental organizations to develop a well co-ordinated international program for the rehabilitation of physically handicapped persons;
2. Providing fellowships, scholarships and experts under the regularly established U.N. programs;
3. Expanding facilities for the dissemination of information on rehabilitation and the preparation of training materials;
4. Assisting in the exchange of knowledge and materials for the manufacture of all types of prosthetic devices.

There is a full chapter on the details of the program which UNESCO was instructed to undertake at that time. There is a tremendous body of knowledge and experience from which we can draw and apply to Canadian problems.

There are several aspects of rehabilitation. There is the question of rehabilitating young people who suffer from physical infirmities, some congenital, some acquired as a result of disease, and some resulting from accidents. I have in my experience known of two or three fine young men who were dying to find some position where they would have a purpose and would be able to maintain themselves. I know of one place where, after a great deal of difficulty, a position was found for a young man who had been very severely disabled, in that he had lost the use of both legs and one arm. However, he was able to sit at a desk handing out cards to persons entering a certain building. This job provided employment for this man for a few hours each day and transformed his life from one of unhappiness and a sense of loneliness to one of happiness with a sense of purpose and well-being.

We know of cases which exist, in which the compensation board officials take a very great interest, that are not covered by the benefits of the compensation board. I refer to farm workers. There are many young men on farms and in rural activities who have not had the opportunity of using the services of the compensation board but who should have the benefit of an extension in this necessary program. We know there are many blind individuals in this country, and we know of, and appreciate, the great work that has been done for them by the Canadian institute for the blind and others who are interested in their welfare and happiness. We realize the problems facing those individuals who have suffered from tuberculosis and who are

able to undertake only limited and light physical activity. We also realize the existence of mentally disabled individuals.

I shall never forget the occasion when the case of a young mentally disabled or sub-normal individual was brought to my attention. This individual had been maintained to a certain period of his life and then was taken out to a farm where he received, first of all, necessary affection, and was given some simple duty to perform. Once he had been shown how to do this he was able to carry on all day. Some thoughtfulness, consideration and concern for his welfare coupled with a spirit of understanding with regard to his requirements, solved the problem of this unfortunate, disabled person.

I have been very interested in this subject for years because I am always touched by those who have to go through life with these limitations. I think we have a first responsibility to these unfortunate citizens. In my opinion this program requires close co-operation between federal and provincial governments, as well as between those governments and voluntary organizations, because this is the type of work that legislation and government action cannot bring to complete fruition. It requires the support and co-operation of voluntary organizations, including churches, service organizations and the other organizations distributed throughout the land that would willingly assist in the expansion of the purposes of this program.

Third, I would suggest we must appeal to the minister to avoid taking a penurious point of view when considering the budget for this program, in view of our total production, total taxation, and the amount of money spent in other directions. I suggest that individual citizens should be called upon to make contributions according to their ability, and I feel that, initially the government should set an example in this respect.

I would suggest that when we have finally rehabilitated the disabled through this program, then we must have a placement program to provide employment which will suit the requirements of the individual cases. This is a field which will require the co-operation of voluntary organizations as well as individuals who are interested in this program.

In conclusion, it is my opinion that if we accept our full responsibility in this respect, along with the provincial and municipal governments, voluntary organizations and all those of us who profess to be Christian citizens in Canada we will find that the fruits of this legislation will be happiness, through purpose, and independence for those who do not now enjoy them.

Mr. Smith (Lincoln): Mr. Chairman, I do not intend to make a speech at this time but