

MATCHING THE MAN TO THE JOB

The following excerpts are from a recent address by the Minister of Manpower and Immigration, Mr. Jean Marchand:

...Canada still depends, to a considerable extent, on immigration for her supply of technical and skilled workers. Occupations in the professional and skilled groups have been in short supply, and some local labour markets have experienced general or specific shortages of workers, while in other areas there were not enough jobs to meet the needs of the community. Job vacancies have been available to the unemployed, but many were unskilled or poorly educated and unable to take advantage of them.

The goals of high economic growth and full employment can never be attained as long as this mismatching of jobs and people continues, and as long as we neglect to seek out the vocational aptitudes of our labour force.

How, then, do we provide the system and the programmes which will enable people to be fully productive and to respond to the present demand for their services in our economy?

We began by manning our five regional offices with top men recruited from Canada's major industries. We have relied heavily on these men to provide us with the kind of people in our more than 200 Canada manpower centres who are trained to offer to the public all the assistance at their disposal. We have developed a strong training programme for this staff to orient them to the needs of the modern labour market and to the challenges which they face daily. Our aim in obtaining and training these people is to further contribute to our ideal of a total manpower service based on counselling. Not the rather old-fashioned idea of placing the individual in a certain job nor of simply providing the employer with the personnel to fill vacant positions, but instead we are now teaching ourselves how to counsel employers and employees in order to help them achieve an effective deployment of the Canadian labour force.

There are a number of key tools used by our counsellors in advising clients, in addition to their own personal academic and vocational qualifications, knowledge of the manpower area, and a keen interest in and understanding of the problems of the labour force in general. These include training programmes, vocational rehabilitation, employment stabilization, and manpower mobility programmes....

I would like for a moment to describe to you some of our present programmes and to tell you how we hope to see these evolve in the future.

TRAINING PROGRAMMES

The educational responsibility in Canada lies with the provincial governments. Because technical and vocational training is so directly related to meeting the needs of the economy, the Federal Government has developed very substantial support for provincial programmes in this field. This has been developed through training plans for both adults and youth. However, as some of you may already know, we propose now to get out of shared-cost programmes in education. We feel that vocational training best

belongs in the provincial system of education. We feel, most strongly, that we must exert our greatest influence, assistance, and knowledge in the training and re-training of people already a part of the work force, whether employed or unemployed. As a part of the work force, these people are of direct interest to the Government in terms of the economic health of the nation. Adult training is very different to that of school education because it can frequently be best carried out within industry, and Government must bear much of this cost. This is the responsibility we are now planning to assume. We propose to leave students to the provincial departments of education and to take a 100 percent financial responsibility for the adult now needing retraining or further training....

We are now working on the setting up of federal-provincial agreements required for the phase-out arrangements for capital grants and for research development, and we are looking to assist those people already enrolled in training programmes who will be caught between the old and new agreements....

REHABILITATION PROGRAMMES

Special efforts are being made to bring people who are not fully competitive due to a physical, social, or psychological handicap into a position where they are able to compete effectively for jobs. The Federal Government works closely with the provinces in the development of rehabilitation programmes financially assisted under federal-provincial agreements. We are broadening our concern in this programme beyond those who are physically handicapped to those who are socially or mentally handicapped, believing that these people can make a worthwhile contribution to economic growth and development and very greatly increase their social and psychological satisfaction from life.

MANPOWER MOBILITY ASSISTANCE

This programme was developed to ensure that no worker need be unemployed because jobs are not available in his home community. The programme was introduced in January of last year and applies to any unemployed worker or under-employed farmer unable to obtain steady employment in his own area. We consider the programme, though a year old, still in the experimental stage and open at any time to improvements. We are already making suggestions to further improve the programme. We propose firstly that the programme be changed so that those who get low wages for a given job in one area can receive benefits permitting them to move to other locations where they can get higher earnings for their talents. Further, the programme should be changed to help persons move from regions which have chronic seasonal unemployment to others where work is steady. We believe as well that the whole mobility scheme could be made more realistic by removing the four-month unemployment limit, and by making grants available to workers who are about to become unemployed through planned lay-offs in companies which are going out of business or cutting back on production.