The Employment of Handicapped Workers in Industry

by

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The inclusion in the agenda of the 37th Session of the International Labour Conference (1954) of the question of the vocational rehabilitation of the disabled marks a further step in the I.L.O. policy of promoting the rehabilitation (including specialised vocational guidance, training and retraining, and employment in useful work) of disabled workers, as declared in the Employment (Transition from War to Peace) Recommendation, 1944. Provisions respecting disabled persons have been included in the Convention and Recommendations adopted by the Conference concerning vocational guidance, vocational training and the provision of employment services, and the Conference will now discuss whether the subject of vocational rehabilitation is suitable for international regulations in the form of a Recommendation.[1] *The I.L.O. is also co-operating with the United Nations and other agencies concerned with the question in drawing up a co-ordinated international programme.*

In the following article the author discusses the principles that should be applied in the placement of handicapped workers in industry, the progress made and the difficulties at present experienced in the application of these principles and the need for educating employers, trade unions and the general public in order to enable these workers to become " an integral part of the manpower source from which industry draws its productive labour ".

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[1] See International Labour Conference, 37th Session, 1954, Report IV (1) : *Vocational Rehabilitation of the Disabled* (Geneva, 1953). A note on the report appeared in the *International Labour Review*, Vol. LXVIII, No. 1, July 1953, p. 89.

INTRODUCTION

ONE of the most conspicuous developments in the field of social welfare in the last decade is the growing recognition of the rights and responsibilities of the handicapped. Social and economic prejudices that have prevented large numbers of handicapped people from taking their rightful place in society are being gradually eliminated. The notion that the handicapped as a group are " different " from other people is being replaced by the realisation that people are essentially similar, alike in many more ways than they are different. The handicapped do not constitute a distinct segment of the population with special characteristics and a special pattern of behaviour. They are individuals, with physical and mental abilities and limitations, like all individuals. If given an opportunity to develop their residual capacities, the handicapped are capable of living a full and independent life.

The new approach to the handicapped is explained as follows in the programme developed by the Working Party on the Rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped established by the United Nations [1] :

> The time has long passed when a handicapped child or a disabled adult should be regarded as a subject for commercial exploitation and trained for the occupation of a professional beggar, or even to be considered as a mere object for charity. Modern methods of medical and sociological science have opened up a new horizon of promise for such individuals. But if this promise is to be fulfilled, and the handicapped person is to have his full chance of life, there must first be a new evaluation of physical disability, based on the following theses :
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> Firstly, that the handicapped person is an individual with full human rights, which he shares in common with the able-bodied, and that he is entitled to receive from his country every possible measure of protection, assistance and opportunity for rehabilitation.
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> Secondly, that by the very nature of his physical handicap he is exposed to the danger of emotional and psychological disturbance, resulting from a deep sense of deprivation and frustration, and that he therefore has a special claim on society for sympathy and constructive help.
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> Thirdly, that he is capable of developing his residual resources to an unexpected degree, if given the right opportunities of so doing, and of becoming in most instances an economic asset to the country instead of being a burden on himself, on his family and on the State.
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> Fourthly, that handicapped persons have a responsibility to the community to contribute their services to the economic welfare of the nation in any way that becomes possible after rehabilitation and training.
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> Fifthly, that the chief longing of the physically handicapped person is to achieve independence within a normal community, instead of spending

[1] The Working Party is composed of representatives of the United Nations, the International Labour Organisation, the World Health Organisation, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation and the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund.

the rest of his life in a segregated institution, or within an environment of disability.

Sixthly, that the rehabilitation of the physically handicapped can only be successfully accomplished by a combination of medical, educational, social and vocational services, working together as a team.

The human factor is not the only consideration that has focused attention on the handicapped in recent years. The economic and social value of restoring the handicapped to a productive life is becoming more and more striking. Advances in medicine have made it possible to conquer diseases which medical science was unable to cope with before, and the life expectancy of people has increased considerably. The number of handicapped persons who, unless given an opportunity to work, must be supported from public funds is growing. Although reliable statistics on the handicapped are lacking in most countries, the fact that there are an estimated 2 million disabled civilians in the United States capable of being rehabilitated, and that the number of registered handicapped persons in Great Britain is approximately nine hundred thousand, speaks for itself. The recent wars added many millions to the population of handicapped people. The following table gives the numbers of registered war-disabled in 14 countries :

Austria	166,000	Greece	24,500
Belgium	121,000	Israel	3,900
Canada	157,000	Italy	355,000
Finland	46,000	Luxembourg	6,000
France	933,000	Turkey	8,800
Federal Republic of Germany	1,555,000	United States	1,919,000
Great Britain	683,000	Yugoslavia	83,000

Source : WORLD VETERANS FEDERATION : *Comparative Report on the Legislation Affecting Disabled Veterans and Other War Victims*, Information Service, Report No. 2 (Nov. 1952).

The direct economic value of rehabilitation is shown by a study recently made by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation of the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare. It was found that 66,000 persons had been rehabilitated during the fiscal year ending 30 June 1951. Of these more than 8,000 had been receiving public assistance, for which $5,700,000 was spent annually. Their earnings in the first year after their rehabilitation are estimated at $40 million. The expenditure of $4 million to rehabilitate them was less than three-quarters of what it would have cost to maintain them for one year. It is estimated that they will pay $1 million annually in federal income taxes alone.[1]

The integration of the handicapped into productive employment must be regarded as a task of great importance. Industry

[1] M. E. SWITZER and H. A. RUSK : *Doing Something for the Disabled* (New York, 1953).

has a significant part to play in providing job opportunities for large numbers of handicapped persons.

General Principles of Placement

The placement of handicapped workers in competitive employment must, if it is to be successful, be based on a realistic approach to the task. Efforts motivated only by sympathy for the disabled will in the long run work to the disadvantage of both employers and the disabled themselves. Any employer is justified in considering efficiency of performance the main criterion in selecting workers. Management wants to know whether the efficiency of impaired workers is comparable to that of non-impaired employees performing identical jobs under the same working conditions. An employer should not be asked to hire a handicapped worker until it has been proved that the latter is able to meet the work standard set up for other workers in the same job.

Work efficiency is a factor composed of several elements, such as quality and rate of production, accident rate and severity, and absenteeism. In hiring a disabled worker the employer expects him to meet the following main requirements :

(a) he must have the skill and the physical abilities to perform the job ;

(b) he must not be a safety hazard to himself and his fellow workers ;

(c) the job must not aggravate his disability.

If these conditions for work efficiency are met there should be no valid reason for the employer to reject a disabled worker. The role of other important factors such as absenteeism and the turnover of workers will largely depend on the way the basic placement requirements are fulfilled.

It is obvious that a non-impaired worker is able to achieve a higher degree of efficiency in those jobs where the physical demands are such that they cannot be met by a disabled person. On the other hand, experience demonstrates that there is a wide variety of jobs in industry that can be efficiently and safely performed by handicapped workers provided that they are placed in a job where they can fully utilise their skills and abilities to meet the specific demands of the job.

Disability and Vocational Handicap

To appreciate the potentialities of handicapped workers an understanding of the modern concept of physical fitness and disability is necessary. While it was common in the past to evaluate

the worker in terms of his general physical fitness, it is today recognised that physical fitness as such must not be identified with ability to perform a particular task. It is well known that practically everyone is physically unsuited for numerous jobs and activities, and that on the other hand very few jobs require all the abilities that a person possesses. If the skills and individual capacities of the disabled worker are properly utilised to meet the demands of the job, a disability is not a handicap in respect to this job. A clear distinction is thus made between physical and vocational handicap. The former is an impairment of an anatomical nature, whereas vocational handicap refers to the lack of ability to meet the requirements of a job.

Various studies have dramatically shown that standards of general physical fitness cannot be applied in determining employability or vocational efficiency. One example is a pre-employment study of 328 men and 104 women applying for jobs in a rolling mill in England in 1943. Of the 328 men, only 3 per cent. were found physically fit in the usual sense of the word ; 61 per cent. had minor impairments and 27 per cent. major disabilities. Of the women, only 4 per cent. were physically fit.[1] The results of physical examinations given to 1,770 workers in a Swedish factory in 1949-50 revealed that the examining physician considered only 16 workers to be physically fit for all work.[2]

Matching Abilities with Jobs

The idea of physical fitness as a condition for employment is thus being replaced by the concept of abilities in relation to job requirements, of matching the abilities of the worker with the specific demands of the job he is to perform. This method is often referred to as " selective placement ", indicating that each person is dealt with individually to find the job for which he is vocationally and physically fit.

It has always been in the interest of employers to place " the right man in the right job ". Systematic methods to achieve this end are, however, of relatively recent origin and were primarily developed during and after the Second World War. The shortage of manpower and the need for increased production stimulated industry to employ large numbers of handicapped workers. Improvements in placement practices were required, and increased attention was paid to the development of special techniques that could be applied in placing workers, whether handicapped or not.

[1] H. A. RUSK and J. TAYLOR : *New Hope for the Handicapped* (New York, 1948).

[2] B. HANMAN : *Physical Capacities and Job Placement* (Stockholm, 1951).

The necessity of evaluating the physical and vocational capacities of the worker in terms of a specific job lead to the development of job analysis techniques. By breaking down the job into its component elements the specific nature and task of the job can be recorded to determine the skills and physical abilities required of the worker to perform the job efficiently and safely. An evaluation of the physical and environmental capacities of the worker is needed to provide a counterpart to the job analysis. By correlating the results of these two analyses the worker is placed in a job for which he is vocationally and physically suited.

In attempting to facilitate the placement of handicapped workers industry sometimes resorts to the seemingly effective and simple method of preparing lists of jobs in which people with certain disabilities can be successfully placed. For instance, the work of a drill press operator is studied with a view to finding out what categories of disabled could be placed in this work. This method is open to the objection that it lays emphasis on the disability rather than on the abilities of the worker and ignores the variations in the demands of jobs in different workshops. It also tends to limit the chances of employment for certain categories of disabled, whose real capacities it does not bring to light. Such lists are of value because they can be used to show employers that the handicapped can be successfully placed in numerous jobs despite their disability.

A method commonly in use at present applies various assessment scales in analysing the jobs and the workers. In their simplest form these scales indicate in general terms the physical demands of the job, describing it, for example, as " light ", " very light ", " heavy ", " very heavy ", etc., and the capacities of the worker, who is correspondingly described as fit for light, very light, or heavy work. Another type of assessment scale includes a number of other factors, such as demands on general stamina, the extremities, vision, hearing and general mental abilities. The worker is appraised for each of these demands according to a scale indicating " excellent ", " good ", " moderately good ", and " poor ", or using other terms for the same purpose.

A number of more elaborate scales include numerous physical and environmental factors and provide a more accurate appraisal of both jobs and workers. By means of a check list, information is recorded on the most common physical activities and working conditions of the particular job, together with specific details of the physical activities in order to specify the degree of activity involved. Details of working conditions and hazards which cannot be shown on the check list are also given separately by the job analyst on the form used. As a counterpart to this analysis a

physical capacities appraisal shows the worker's capacities for carrying on those physical activities under the working conditions recorded. When making this analysis the physician has not only to indicate whether the worker has full capacity, limited capacity or no capacity at all for the activities listed under the specified working conditions ; he has also to provide details concerning those factors for which the worker has only partial capacity. This makes it possible to obtain more accurate information on the factors involved without losing the advantage of a simple check list.

The chief drawback of this method lies in the fact that the rating of the physical demands and qualifications depends largely on the judgment of the analyst, which makes it somewhat unreliable. The use of more or less general terms means that the scales show considerable variation, owing to the varying assessments made by different people.

In order to develop a more precise method Bert Hanman uses, to record physical and environmental demands, a statement of facts based on the hour as the standard unit. [1] This makes possible a more precise presentation of the facts, without impractical complexities.

To show how this method works in practice, it may be of interest to explain how it was applied in a large factory in Sweden. All jobs were first analysed by trained job analysts. The results were recorded on a form comprising 80 physical and environmental factors involved in the performance of the job. This analysis showed the maximum amount of hours a day required by each factor (e.g., " lifting 6-10 kg. : 2 hrs. "). Vision requirements were recorded on a special form, using code numbers. The environmental factors, such as " inside ", " outside ", " moving objects ", " electrical hazards ", etc., were recorded as well, in terms of the time involved in each case. These analyses of individual jobs were then put together to form " master charts ", which were distributed to the plant physician, placement officers, supervisors and foremen. When an applicant arrives he is examined by the physician to determine his physical and environmental capacities. The physician records his findings on a form designed to match the " master chart ". By placing this form in the right position on the chart the worker's abilities can easily be compared with the demands of the job.

The value of this method can be shown if we examine the way in which workers were chosen at a factory to operate a particular type of metal lathe. To analyse this job 29 separate job analyses were required. The skill requirements for the majority of these jobs were about the same, but the physical demands were very

[1] *Physical Capacities and Job Placement*, op. cit.

different. Thus there was one particular lathe operator's job where the maximum amount of lifting required was only 0.5-2 kilograms for one hour a day, compared with 26-50 kilograms for three hours a day in another case. A lathe operator, however skilled and energetic, possessed of only limited ability to lift, would not succeed in a job requiring the lifting of up to 50 kilograms.

This method has been tested in the United States, Sweden and Norway with very satisfactory results. It has been recommended by the National Research Council of the United States and by the Swedish Central Committee for the Care of Cripples.

Job modifications are sometimes undertaken when handicapped workers are placed in industry. This is in many cases helpful. However, it may affect production if the modified jobs are vacated by the handicapped workers and must be restored to the original condition. Re-engineering, therefore, is usually not undertaken on a large scale. Simple arrangements, such as facilitating access to work and improving the mobility of severely handicapped workers, may frequently be of considerable value.

The procedure of " selective placement " has been criticised for laying too much emphasis on the physiological aspects of the problem. It should, however, be pointed out that the job analysis provides information not only on the physical and environmental demands of a job but also on the skill, training, responsibility and personality traits required of the worker. The fitness of the worker for the job is determined in relation to his total qualifications, of which his physical abilities are only a part. The placement officer obtains, through a placement interview, information on training, past work experience and record, personality and interests, etc. To facilitate this work a number of " occupational tools " have been designed, such as job family lists, job descriptions, trade tests, aptitude batteries and various interviewing aids. These techniques are known to all trained placement personnel and need no further elaboration here. The physical aspects of the problem have naturally received considerable attention in recent years in view of the necessity to work for general acceptance of the modern concept of vocational fitness. That does not, however, mean that the non-physical factors affecting the placement process are overlooked.

Work Efficiency of the Handicapped

Since the rate and quality of production, accident rates and absenteeism are the main factors in the measurement of work efficiency, a number of studies have been carried out, primarily in the United States, to demonstrate the work efficiency of the handicapped.

One widely known survey carried out over a two-year period by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the United States Department of Labor for the Veterans Administration covered 11,028 disabled workers and 8,251 non-impaired workers subject to the same job incentives and exposed to the same job hazards. The results of this survey are shown in the table below.

WORK PERFORMANCE OF WORKERS WITH SERIOUS PHYSICAL DISABILITIES AND OF MATCHED NON-DISABLED WORKERS

Group	Absenteeism frequency rate [1]	Non-disabling injury frequency rate [2]	Disabling injury			Outpout relative [6]	Voluntary leaving rate [7]
			Frequency rate [3]	Time-lost rate [4]	Average days of disability [5]		
	Average performance						
Disabled	3.8	9.9	8.9	0.10	14.5	101.0	3.6
Non-disabled	3.4	9.9	9.5	0.11	14.9	100.0	2.6

1 Number of days lost per 100 scheduled workdays.
2 Number of injuries per 10,000 exposure-hours.
3 Number of injuries per million exposure-hours.
4 Number of days lost for disabling injury per 100 scheduled workdays.
5 Number of days of disability per disabling injury.
6 Percentage relationship of production efficiency of disabled to that of matched non-disabled.
7 Number of voluntary leavers per 100 employees in the survey group.

It can be seen that the handicapped compare favourably with the able-bodied workers. A slight difference to the disadvantage of the handicapped was shown only in respect to absenteeism and labour turnover, but the difference is insignificant.

A study made by a committee of the American Association of Industrial Physicians and Surgeons compared 685 physically impaired workers with the same number of non-impaired workers in a large factory. The results showed 7.9 per cent. more resignations among non-impaired workers; the rate of absenteeism was 7 per cent. lower for the handicapped, who also had 5.5 per cent. fewer accidents. A 4.6 per cent. increase in earnings was registered for the handicapped compared to 4 per cent. for the able-bodied workers.[1]

Another interesting study was made by the National Association of Manufacturers and the Chamber of Commerce of the United States in 1949. A survey was made, with the participation of 279 companies, of prevailing practices with regard to physically handicapped and over-age workers. It was found that among these workers there was less absenteeism and steadier work, better work habits, less turnover—both physically handicapped

[1] *Journal of the American Medical Association*, Vol. 116, 1941, p. 1380.

and older workers tended to remain on the job and have a stabilising influence on the younger workers—and quality and output were good.

Preparation for Employment

It has already been emphasised that the handicapped should be thought of in terms of abilities rather than disabilities and that general physical standards should not be used to prevent the handicapped from competing for employment in industry. But recognising these principles is not sufficient: the handicapped must have access to services needed to develop their physical and vocational abilities to the maximum. Any placement programme for the handicapped must be closely integrated with services providing medical care and physical and vocational rehabilitation.

It goes without saying that reducing the disability is basic to any other step in the employment of the handicapped. The fundamental role of surgery and medical treatment combined with medical rehabilitation in preparing the handicapped for a productive life is obvious. A serious shortage of facilities and trained personnel is unfortunately in most countries a great problem, the consequences of which can be seen in many workshops. Too often one comes across a person who has considerable difficulty in his work through a disability that could have been reduced or removed had he been subjected to proper treatment and medical rehabilitation. It is an important responsibility for employers, placement officers and rehabilitation personnel to see to it that existing facilities are fully utilised and that no disabled person is referred to training or employment until everything has been done to reduce his disability.

The importance of adequate vocational training as a preparation for industrial employment has become increasingly evident in recent years. During the war the shortage of manpower made it possible for large numbers of handicapped persons to find jobs, even if their skill and work experience did not reach the usual standard at the time of entering the job. The manpower situation is now different in many countries and the handicapped must fully meet the skill requirements if they are to secure and retain jobs on the competitive labour market. Studies carried out in many countries show that a lack of training is frequently one of the main obstacles in the placement of handicapped in skilled and semi-skilled jobs. This fact has received increased attention in recent years and vocational guidance and training facilities are being developed in many countries. One of the reasons for this favourable trend is the important work being done by the Inter-

national Labour Organisation in promoting international standards in this field.

Along with the development of vocational training programmes consideration has been given to the necessity of preparing handicapped workers psychologically for productive work. It is understandable that a person is not psychologically fit to undergo training or to take up employment after a prolonged period of treatment and convalescence. A programme of work training and assessment combined with physical exercises, to build up work tolerance, work habits, confidence and emotional stability, will often help to enable the handicapped to cope with the demands of a full workday. The largest programme of this type is in operation in Great Britain, where a number of industrial rehabilitation units under the Ministry of Labour and National Service provide physical and psychological readjustment to work. Courses of six to seven weeks are provided in conditions similar to those under which the disabled will have to work.[1]

An outstanding example of this type of service in private industry is the rehabilitation and retraining scheme operated by Vauxhall Motors, Ltd., England. The injured workers are here given remedial physical exercises in the form of productive work in an actual working environment, either in the retraining shop or in the man's normal place of work in the factory. The equipment used in the work is, when required, modified to provide the exercise prescribed by the physician. Considerable attention has also been devoted to this problem in the United States, Canada and the Scandinavian countries.

Extensive research is still necessary into the physiological and psychological factors that have a bearing on the successful employment of the handicapped. Important experimental programmes of research into the work physiology and psychology of the handicapped are being carried out in several countries. The activities of the work clinic of the Karolinska Hospital in Stockholm may be mentioned in this connection as a pilot scheme of importance.[2]

Administrative Aspects of Placement

The International Labour Conference has adopted the following standards in respect of employment services :

> The employment service shall be so organised as to ensure effective recruitment and placement, and for this purpose shall assist workers to

[1] See W. L. Buxton : " Industrial Rehabilitation Units : A British Experiment ", in *International Labour Review*, Vol. LXVII, No. 6, June 1953.

[2] Bengt Åkerblad : " Rehabilitation—koordination mellan sjukvård och arbetsvard ", in *Svenska Läkartidningen*, 1952, No. 49.

find suitable employment and assist employers to find suitable workers, and more particularly shall, in accordance with rules framed on a national basis, register applicants for employment, take note of their occupational qualifications, experience and desires, interview them for employment, evaluate if necessary their physical and vocational capacity, and assist them where appropriate to obtain vocational guidance or vocational training or retraining.[1]

Measures should be taken in appropriate cases to develop, within the general framework of the employment services . . . special arrangements for the placement of disabled persons.[2]

In a number of European countries employers are required by law to take on a certain percentage of disabled persons. Such a quota system was first introduced with respect to war-disabled in Germany in 1923. According to available information, quota legislation is at the present time in force in at least the following countries: Austria, Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, the Netherlands, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Poland and Yugoslavia. The quota varies from 2 per cent. to 10 per cent. and applies in certain countries only to the war-disabled.

It should be pointed out that the obligation of employers to provide jobs for a certain number of handicapped persons is not the only important element in the quota scheme. The necessity of placing the handicapped in jobs for which they have the physical and vocational qualifications has been realised in the countries where the quota system has been initiated. Special arrangements to ensure efficient placement within the quota system have been made, such as the use of disablement resettlement officers in Great Britain and selective placement officers in the Netherlands.

The best developed quota system is probably that of Great Britain. Under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act of 1944 those employers are subject to the quota obligation who have a total of not less than 20 employees. The quota scheme affects every employer, whether an individual or a body corporate and applies to the total of the employer's staff, even though the personnel may be employed in different places or establishments. Thus an employer with three different branches, each employing less than 20 workers, is subject to the quota obligation if he is actually employing a total of 20 or more. The quota for each employer is determined by applying the appropriate percentage to the number employed in the various classes of employment. There are two kinds of percentage, standard and special. Special percentages, which may be higher or lower than the standard percentage, may be fixed by the Ministry of Labour for a particular trade or industry or for a particular class of employer. The stand-

[1] Employment Service Convention, 1948.

[2] Employment Service Recommendation, 1948.

ard percentage is at present 3. No special percentages have as yet been introduced, except for ships' crews employed in the fishing and shipping industries, where the quota is 0.1 per cent. A special registry of disabled persons exists under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act. Only the registered disabled are eligible for placement and the other services provided by the Act.

The actual placement work is the responsibility of the disablement resettlement officers attached to each local employment exchange of the Ministry of Labour and National Service. It is the disablement resettlement officer's duty not only to do the initial placement but also to make sure that the handicapped worker is satisfactorily adjusted to the job.

In certain other countries a different line has been followed in the provision of placement services for the handicapped. No obligation to engage handicapped persons has been placed on employers but a special placement service for the handicapped, attached to the national employment service, has been established in some countries. The general principle is that the disabled who are not vocationally handicapped are placed by the ordinary placement personnel, whereas handicapped persons requiring special placement are referred to placement officers equipped to deal with them. The most comprehensive placement programmes of this type are in the United States, Canada and Sweden.

The United States Employment Service may well be cited as an example of efficient planning and organisation of job placement. Trained personnel is available at all local employment offices to deal with handicapped persons who require special placement. A number of important " occupational tools " have been developed such as the *Dictionary of Occupational Titles,* which identifies approximately 22,000 jobs, job-family series, interviewing aids and manuals on placement techniques. Important promotional work is being done by the Employment Service in co-operation with other government agencies and voluntary organisations, among which the employers' associations and the trade unions play an important role.

The selection and training of placement personnel is given considerable attention in the United States. As an example, the state of New York, which started a selective placement programme in 1933, has developed a regular training scheme for placement interviewers. A special guide, *Handbook of Selective Placement,* is at the disposal of the employment office personnel ; it covers the disabilities most frequently found, and for each indicates the significant factors to be considered in placement.

The relative merits of quota legislation and voluntary placement services have been the subject of much discussion. Both have their

advantages and drawbacks. The system to be adopted depends naturally in the first place on the special conditions prevailing in each country. It should be pointed out that, whatever the administrative arrangements, placement based on an understanding of the abilities of the handicapped workers should be the substance of any employment programme.

Present Difficulties in the Placement of Handicapped Workers

It is obvious that an appreciation of the potentialities of impaired workers is gradually increasing among employers. It must be recognised, however, that there are still many difficulties hampering effective utilisation of the handicapped as a source of industrial manpower.

Despite many improvements in employment procedures, job analysis as a basis for placement is still rare in a great many countries. It must be assumed that placement personnel in many countries will have to manage for a considerable time without the advantage of the results of job analyses in large-scale placement. The promotion of job analysis schemes in as many enterprises as possible is important, but there will be many small employers who are not prepared to carry out systematic job analyses. It must also be recognised that in obtaining a physical capacities assessment of the worker the services of medical specialists will long be limited in many countries. The role of well trained placement personnel is, therefore, most important. The placement officer should be able to interpret medical reports and to make a satisfactory appraisal of the applicant's abilities for the job even if no medical evaluation is available. Good knowledge of interviewing techniques and of the use of occupational information is also required. The development of " occupational tools " for the use of placement personnel should be part of the responsibility of any placement programme for the handicapped.

Unfortunately the selection and training of placement personnel has not received the attention it deserves. Extensive training courses are arranged for physical therapists, occupational therapists and social workers, but very little has so far been done in most countries to train placement personnel to deal with the handicapped. The results obtained through expensive physical and vocational rehabilitation are, therefore, often jeopardised by incompetent placement officers. It should be remembered that the work of the placement officers is more important and exacting than many jobs in the field of rehabilitation.

An obstacle of considerable importance is the practice of many employers of following the line of rigid physical standards and not considering job requirements when engaging workers. Pre-employment physical examinations are often made in terms of job exclusion rather than of job placement. However, more and more employers see the need for a reorientation of physical examination procedures. The objectives of pre-employment examinations, as conceived by the National Association of Manufacturers in the United States, are the following :

(1) to place the applicant in a job wherein his abilities and experience meet the demands of the job ;

(2) to ensure that in every transfer or promotion the physical capabilities of the individual are as well suited to the job as are his other qualifications ;

(3) to safeguard the health and safety of the applicant's co-workers ;

(4) to inform the applicant of his physical condition and advise him on the improvement and maintenance of health.[1]

If these principles are recognised by employers, the pre-employment physical examination will be an important means to ensure proper placement in industry, which will protect both the employers and the workers.

The physical standards for government posts and other types of public employment require reconsideration in most countries. This question has received considerable attention since the Second World War. Special committees have been appointed in several countries to review legislation governing appointments to public employment with a view to eliminating obstacles to the handicapped based on prejudices which no longer should exist.

A reason sometimes given for failure to employ impaired workers is that the workmen's compensation rates will be increased as a result of employing such workers. This belief is often based on misinformation ; enlightened insurance companies agree that the employment of impaired workers must not affect the insurance rates, which are based on the relative hazards of the industry and the employers' accident experience. It has been clearly demonstrated that properly placed impaired workers do not increase the accident frequency. The reluctance to hire impaired workers for fear of higher insurance costs will decrease as more employers realise this fact.

The establishment of second injury provisions protects the employers from any additional costs by providing for the payment

[1] *Health Service in Industry*, a 1951 survey by the National Association of Manufacturers and a 1950 survey by the American College of Surgeons, reprinted from *Health Resources in the United States*.

of compensation from a second injury fund for any additional disability arising from the combination of first and second injuries. The employer's liability is thus limited to the second injury only. This system is to be preferred to the practice sometimes followed by employers whereby the worker signs a waiver of compensation in order to secure employment. The latter arrangement, although designed to help handicapped workers to find employment, is generally opposed on the ground that it deprives the impaired worker of the protection of workmen's compensation, to which all workers should be entitled.

The importance attached to the danger of " second injuries " seems to be over-emphasised. Dr. Henry Kessler [1] reports that of 3,376 cases in his experience, only 12 had had second injuries. He points out that " though the causation of accidents may be traced to technical and human factors, physical defect is not a major contributing factor ".

Conclusion

In spite of the progress made in promoting job opportunities for impaired workers, much remains to be done in educating employers, the trade unions and the general public regarding the abilities of handicapped workers. It is not sufficient to obtain endorsement in principle from employers' associations and trade unions. Management, foremen, industrial physicians and placement personnel, as well as fellow workers, must be brought to an understanding of the potentialities of the impaired workers and their place as members of the productive labour force. Any programme in public education must be based on the fact that handicapped workers properly trained and placed are as good employees as the so-called able-bodied. The idea of identifying general physical fitness with working capacity must gradually give way to a concept of abilities in relation to the demands of the job. If this is generally recognised and if adequate rehabilitation services are available and effective placement techniques employed, the impaired workers will cease to be regarded as vocationally speaking a " second class " category of citizens and will become an integral part of the manpower source from which industry draws its productive labour.

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[1] Henry Kessler : *Rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped* (New York, 1947).