

Order workers (1949)

R E P O R T

of the

C O U N S E L L I N G S E R V I C E

for

A P P L I C A N T S F O R E M P L O Y M E N T

over

45 YEARS OF AGE

for the first year of operation
December 1, 1947 to November 30, 1948

"ONTARIO REGION
Canada NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE COMMISSION".

Counselling Office - 200 Bay Street
TORONTO

[1949?]

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C O N T E N T S

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Foreword (Origin and development of idea)

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F O R E W O R D (1)

At a meeting of the Ontario Regional Advisory Board, Labour Department, held in the office of the Chairman, Mr. G. W. Ritchie, on August 18, 1947, a Sub-committee was appointed to make a survey of the Older Age Group of applicants for employment in the Ontario Region.

The Chairman appointed the following members:

- B. G. Sullivan - Ontario Regional Superintendent,
National Employment Service as Chairman.
- G. H. Parliament - Superintendent, Rehabilitation,
Department of Veterans' Affairs,
District "TC".
- J. J. Richards - Executive Secretary,
Ontario Rehabilitation Committee.
- Wilfred Sanders - Canadian Institute of Public Opinion.
- G. A. L. Gibson - Assistant to Chairman,
Ontario Regional Advisory Board as
Secretary.

The Committee's report (2) based on facts assembled by the Special Placements Division of the National Employment Service, Ontario Region, which was presented to the Board included the following recommendation:

"Counselling and Placement

We require a special counselling and placement service for older applicants:

- "(a) First of all, the persons who really desire work must be ascertained.

"It would appear that not all applicants for employment want work. Some are registered for work in order to become claimants for Unemployment Insurance Benefits. Elderly persons who have contributed to the Unemployment Insurance Fund since its inception feel that they have paid for unemployment benefits and are entitled to them. No amount of explanation by the employment officer serves to disillusion them from this fixed belief. In many cases these elderly persons state quite truthfully that they have a "weak back" or some other affliction and can do only "light work", knowing that there are not as many jobs of this nature available.

"To repeat - the persons who want work must be ascertained. This will require real skill on the part of the employment officer. Certain officers have found a simple question at the beginning of the interview helpful: "Could you begin work today?" If the applicant hesitates or begins to state reasons why he will be forced to wait until a later date he is deemed not very enthusiastic about a job. The ability to segregate those desiring work comes with experience.

- "(b) As soon as the bona fide work applicants are ascertained they should be interviewed at length - as long as is necessary to learn the complete story of their skills, abilities and interests. They will need to be coded into certain occupational groups.

(1) Taken from interim report March 1948.

(2) Copies of this report have been distributed. Additional copies available on request.

"(c)

Many will need counselling. Because they have become accustomed to think of work in terms of jobs in definite factories or shops they must be given guidance to think in new terms of work possibilities. They must become willing to experiment along new lines. It is a real challenge to the employment officers to do some thinking in order to give leadership to the men over 45 in their search for new job opportunities.

"In the matter of obtaining employment for older persons a somewhat parallel problem exists to that of youth. In youth placements Vocational Guidance is one of the major needs. The youth has no work experience - has no intimate knowledge of the requirements of the many occupations and the advantages and disadvantages involved in them. He must relate his training, ability and interests to possible occupational fields and occupational levels. However, he is eager and prepared to adapt himself to his future.

"The older person, too, requires Vocational Guidance. He, however, is very reluctant to admit that his potentialities are declining. He is not eager to make radical changes in his occupational life. The accountant, salesman or locomotive engineer is not willing to admit that he can no longer keep pace or fit into the occupation to which he has been very successful and happy.

"Providing guidance for such individuals is just as essential as for youth, but it requires a radically different approach and technique, and as much if not more expert direction."

During the general discussion which followed, Messrs. Sullivan and Parliament agreed to consider what could be done to implement the above recommendation on an experimental basis, and at a meeting of the Board on November 17, Mr. Sullivan reported as follows:

"With the active co-operation of Mr. Parliament, I have arranged for a temporary unit to be set up by December 1st under Dr. W. G. Scott of the Special Placements Section, located probably at 200 Bay Street to which applicants in the older age group will be referred for counselling regarding employment possibilities."

The Service was commenced on December 1, 1947, at 200 Bay Street with the following personnel:

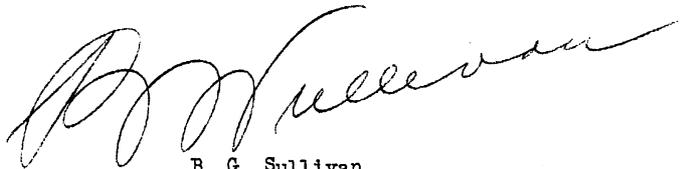
Mr. P. J. Spring	-	Counsellor, D.V.A. (on loan)
Miss B. E. Stubbs	-	Employment & Claims Officer, Toronto Office, National Employment Service.
Miss V. Amendola	-	Stenographer, Toronto Office, National Employment Service.
Dr. W. G. Scott	-	Employment Adviser, Special Placements, Ontario Regional Office, National Employment Service. (Unit Head).

(Note): During the year changes have taken place in personnel of staff other than Dr. W. G. Scott, who has remained constantly in charge. Staff reductions in D.V.A. caused that department to withdraw representative March 31, 1948. Since that time staff has been wholly that of N.E.S.

For the first few days the time was spent largely in training the staff in counselling older persons and acquainting them with the literature on the subject. The latter consisted of periodical literature and such books as Dr. Lillian Martin's two works, "Counselling Older Persons" and "Sweeping the Cobwebs", and the "Nuffield Report on Older Persons" (Great Britain 1947).

The number of applicants, naturally, was small at first because of the novelty of this type of a counselling service. It was entirely voluntary. Unemployment Insurance Benefits were not jeopardized by failure to agree to be counselled. All applicants came on an appointment basis and a one-hour minimum was allowed for each interview. Many had two, three, and some four, or five interviews, depending on their desires and individual needs. In other words, not only was the employment record of the individual discussed fully, but time was taken to know the person thoroughly.

Applicants came with a large element of fear and frustration, but when their problems were listened to respectfully and a constructive plan outlined for them, they were greatly encouraged. They universally exclaimed words to the effect, "This is wonderful!" One man who had lately come from England said, "I should like a Counselling Service such as this introduced in all employment offices. I would like to see it introduced in England." One elderly school-teacher said, "I didn't know before that anyone really cared whether I was employed or not." The fact that they telephoned for re-interviews and told their friends of the service confirms their need for this type of thing.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "B. G. Sullivan". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

B. G. Sullivan,
Ontario Regional Superintendent.

P A R T I

APPLICANTS REFERRED AND COUNSELLED

1. Applicants Referred (with source of referral)

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Toronto Local Office	993	87
Regional Office	23	2
Executive and Professional Office	51	2
New Toronto Local Office	2	
On their own (self)	25	3
Employers	6	5
Toronto Welfare Council	2	2
Dept. of Veterans' Affairs	6	
Society for Crippled Civilians	1	
Second Mile Club	1	
Toronto Dept. of Health	4	
Regional Advisory Board Member	1	
Interested Individuals	9	
Immigration Dept.	2	1
University of Toronto		1
National Society for the Deaf	2	
Y.W.C.A.		1
Metropolitan Church	1	
Neighbourhood Workers' Association	<u> </u>	<u>1</u>
	1129	105

The total of 1234 applicants referred to the Counselling Unit was reduced by a monthly average of eight men and women who failed to report for counselling. A few of the latter were individuals who had secured work but for the most part they were applicants who were not convinced of the advantages to be gained from counselling. The 1138 interviewed persons were each seen on one to five occasions as there were many repeat visits to meet the individuals' desires and needs.

2. Age of Applicants Counsellled

Under 40	60	Or-	Under 45	7.9%
40 - 44	30		45 - 59	30.8%
45 - 49	76		60 and over	<u>61.3%</u>
50 - 54	146			
55 - 59	159		Total	100%
60 - 64	208			
65 - 69	283			
70 - 74	138			
75 and over	<u>38</u>			
Total	1138			

3. Veterans and Civilians Counsellled

Veterans

Boer War	16		
World War I	262		
World War II	51		
Dual	<u>51</u>		
Total	380	or	32.9%

Civilians 758 " 67.1%

Total 1138

4. Country of Birth

Canada	529
British Isles	493
Europe	88
United States	23
India	2
British West Indies	2
New Zealand	<u>1</u>

1138

An interesting fact is that 44% of the individuals counsellled were born in the British Isles and had emigrated to Canada, many of them prior to World War I. These British immigrants form almost as large a group as native-born Canadians.

5. Number of Towns and Cities in which persons had resided

That practically all these individuals had moved about in search of employment is evident from the following table:

Lived in one city (Toronto)	80
" " two cities or towns	343
" " three " " "	313
" " four " " "	188
" " five " " "	101
" " six " " "	58
" " seven " " "	28
" " eight " " "	19
" " ten " " "	<u>8</u>

Total 1138

6. Age of Leaving School

Twenty-nine applicants were without any formal education. Over 50% had concluded their schooling by 14 years; over 90% by 18 years.

No schooling		29
Concluded School,	7 yrs.	2
"	9 "	5
"	10 "	20
"	11 "	27
"	12 "	83
"	13 "	133
"	14 "	263
"	15 "	150
"	16 "	153
"	17 "	109
"	18 "	62
"	19 "	17
"	20 "	24
"	21 "	17
"	22 "	6
"	23 "	10
"	24 "	9
"	25 "	5
"	26 "	4
"	27 "	1
"	28 "	1
"	29 "	1
"	30 "	4
"	31 "	1
"	32 "	1
"	33 "	<u>1</u>
	Total	1138

7. Education (Grade Completed)

Forty-two (42.6) per cent of those interviewed had had the advantage of secondary school education - in whole or part. Of the 653 (57.4%) who had concluded their education with elementary school only 337 or approximately 1/2 of this group secured High School Entrance.

No Schooling		29
Completed Grade	2	8
"	3	14
"	4	24
"	5	48
"	6	107
"	7	86
"	8	337
"	9	108
"	10	97
"	11	73
"	12	79
"	13	<u>128</u>
	Total	1138

8. Additional Education

Certain individuals had studied commercial subjects - book-keeping, shorthand, typing, etc. Night school and other courses in Art, Music, Banking, etc. had attracted others. 109 members of the group had attended university in whole or part; 16 had had the advantage of post graduate study; 3 were graduate physicians; 4 other professions were represented. A striking illustration of the lack of skilled artisans in the group was that only 22 individuals had apprentice training.

Commercial School	195
Art, Music, Banking Courses, etc.	136
Technical School	149
University (in whole or part)	109
Post Graduate Courses (University)	16
Specialized (University):	
Medicine	3
Law	1
Theology	1
Pharmacy	1
Chartered Accountancy	1
Teacher Training	18
Apprenticeship	22

9. Leisure Time Activities

The presence of interests was noted from a study of leisure time activities.

An interesting fact was that over 50% of the group participated in activities which might be designated as "hobbies". Certain of these proved to have occupational significance.

Reading (other than newspapers)	767
Belonged to clubs or associations	572
Manual	354
Hobbies	539

10. Health

Contrary to popular opinion, the health of the great majority of those interviewed appeared to be good. This in spite of the fact that approximately 2/3 of the group were over 60 years of age. The answers to the question, "What is your own estimate of your general health?" were as follows:

"Excellent"	56
"Good"	586
"Fair"	441
"Poor"	55

Each applicant gave the name of his physician, and where the health condition appeared to warrant it, the applicant's written permission for the counsellor to consult the physician was obtained. Information was generously supplied by the physicians, and was, in all cases most helpful in determining suitable occupations for those where failing health was a factor to be considered.

Our experience in working closely with physicians in all cases where health was a problem leads to one conclusion - there is need for many more applicants being transferred to Special Placements. Here the physician is always consulted.

Other social and civic organizations were contacted as occasion demanded. For example:-

Canadian National Institute for the Blind
National Society for the Deaf
The Salvation Army
Department of Health (City)
Department of Welfare (City and Province)
The Social Work Departments of the City Hospitals
Department of Veterans' Affairs
Toronto Psychiatric Hospital
The Workmen's Compensation Board

11. Length of Time Unemployed

Apart from interested individuals who had heard of the Counselling Service, and were anxious to be interviewed; elderly persons who were referred by employers, etc., practically all applicants for counselling were in receipt of Unemployment Insurance Benefits. The periods of unemployment varied from two weeks to over two years (in rare cases). Fourteen persons were employed and desired advice regarding a changing of occupation.

Period of Unemployment	under 3 mos.	449
" " "	3 mos. and under 6 mos.	325
" " "	6 " " " 12 "	231
" " "	12 " " " 2 yrs.	89
" " "	over 2 yrs.	30
Employed		14

12. Individuals' Problems

A complete classification of the problems encountered during the interviews would be too exhaustive. Attention is drawn to the three major fields where problems existed concerning employment.

Practically all persons claimed that their major problem was economic. Thirty-two only had sufficient savings to live comfortably without working. A few of the veterans were on 100% disability pensions. Each civilian pension was deemed inadequate to maintain a home at the present time.

Two hundred and thirty-three individuals (or approximately 20%) regarded their health as a serious problem.

"Personal" problems referred to the individuals or their families. These influenced the employment record in many instances.

A listing of the main problems follows:

Economic	1106 individuals
Health	233 "
Personal	193 "
Improve position	62 "

13. Number of Jobs Coded by Local Office

Coded for one job only	-	605	individuals
" " two jobs	" -	455	"
" " three "	" -	11	"
" " four "	" -	3	"
Came through other sources		64	"

Coding of applicants by the Employment Office appeared to improve considerably during the year that counselling was in operation. The number coded for two jobs increased markedly. This improvement was no doubt due to many factors, chief of which may have been staff training and also the counselling service. There is still a marked tendency for registration units to register a man "over 60" as a "watchman" and a "cleaner" - this, in spite of past experience.

14. Number of Jobs Recommended as a Result of Counselling

That interviewing individuals at length does increase the number of avenues of possible employment is shown by the following table (compared with the table in No. 13 above). Not only were the chances of employment increased three-fold and four-fold as a result of counselling, but suitable jobs were substituted for unsuitable ones.

One job recommended	-	49	individuals
Two jobs	" -	183	"
Three "	" -	372	"
Four "	" -	338	"
Five "	" -	136	"
Six "	" -	39	"
Seven "	" -	13	"
Eight "	" -	2	"
Unemployable persons		6	"

15. Pensions (Army disability and Civilian)

Apart from three veterans who were receiving 100% disability pensions, the pensions were not substitutes for work as a means of livelihood. This was especially true at a time of high costs of living. Most retiring (civilian) pensions were found to be low in amount.

The following were the number of pensioners together with the amount of their allowances:

(a) Army (disability)

Under \$20 per month	21
\$20 to \$39 " "	25
\$40 to \$59 " "	15
\$60 to \$79 " "	10
\$80 and over " "	<u>3</u>

(b) Civilian

1. Retirement

Under \$20 per month	6
\$20 to \$39 " "	52
\$40 to \$59 " "	43
\$60 to \$79 " "	22
\$80 and over " "	<u>7</u>

130

2. Disability and Old Age

(a) Workmen's Compensation

Under \$20 per month	2
\$20 to \$39 " "	4
\$40 to \$59 " "	<u>1</u>

7

(b) Old Age 5

(c) Veterans' Allowances 2

In addition to these pensioners, a small group of individuals (32) had built up economic security for themselves. This number appears abnormally small when it is noted that individuals were counselled who had received \$7,000, \$8,000, \$11,000, \$13,000 and \$19,000 yearly earnings. These were rare earnings. However, over 1/3 of the group had highest yearly earnings of \$2,500.

16. Stability of Applicants

The stability of each applicant counselled was judged by his ability to stay employed by one employer for a period of at least five years. Judged by this test the vast majority of applicants dealt with were quite reliable. Many had records of 20, 30 and some 40 and 50 years' continuous employment with one employer. One man (82) had a record of 66 years!

Those having records of under 5 years with one employer	154
" " " " over 5 " and under 10 yrs. with one emp.	271
" " " " " 10 " " " 20 " " " "	359
" " " " " 20 " " " 30 " " " "	218
" " " " " 30 " " " 40 " " " "	102
" " " " " 40 " " " 50 " " " "	30
" " " " " 50 " " " 60 " " " "	1
" " " " " 60 and over with one employer	1
No employment record	2

17. Highest Wages or Salaries earned by Applicants

A study was made of the highest yearly earnings of the individuals counselled. From the following table it will be seen that approximately 62% of the total had earned incomes of \$2,000 or over; 20% - \$3,000, or over.

Highest Wages or Salaries earned by Applicants

Under \$1000	10
\$1000 - \$1199	29
\$1200 - 1499	107
\$1500 - 1749	167
\$1750 - 1999	172
\$2000 - 2499	273
\$2500 - 2999	167
\$3000 - 4999	156
\$5000 - 7499	43
\$7500 - 9999	7
\$10,000 - 14,999	6
\$15,000 and over	1

18. Employment of Counsellled Applicants

The Counselling Unit did not make placements. The function of the unit was solely counselling. After an applicant had been interviewed on one or more occasions, he was sent back to the Local Office for referral to employment.

One acid test of counselling is: Does it lead to employment of these "difficult-to-place" older individuals?

Judged by this test alone the Counselling Unit more than justified itself. To date (December 13) it is known that 630 of the individuals counsellled have obtained work!

A study of the following tables revealing the ages of the successful applicants makes their accomplishments more noteworthy. Whereas the Forty Plus Club of Western New York describes the applicant "over 60" as "just about impossible to place"; our figures show that 299 of our successful applicants belonged to this age group. Fifty-one were seventy years and over!

One feature of counselling that should not be overlooked was that many applicants, encouraged and impressed of their worth to industry by the interviews, went out and got jobs for themselves. Previously they had tried repeatedly to obtain employment and in time had become discouraged. Counselling had given them the hope and courage for a new effort. This time they succeeded. 426 of our counsellled applicants secured their own jobs!

(a) Through Local Office and Executive and Professional Offices

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
44 years and under	12	4
45 to 49 years	21	3
50 to 54 "	34	5
55 to 59 "	37	4
60 to 64 "	35	5
65 to 69 "	31	1
#70 years and over	<u>11</u>	<u> </u>
	181	22

Total - 203

Two - 70; one each 71, 72, 73; three each - 74, 75

(b) Through Their Own Efforts

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
44 years and under	41	7
45 to 49 years	28	3
50 to 54 "	59	4
55 to 59 "	66	2
60 to 64 "	75	11
65 to 69 "	87	3
#70 years and over	<u>39</u>	<u>1</u>
	395	31
		Total <u>426</u>

#Nine - 70; six - 71; four - 72; six each - 73, 74;
five - 75; one - 76; two - 78; one - 79.

(c) John Howard Society

1

Grand Total 630

The difficulties facing the Employment Office in placing these older applicants have already been noted: - (a) the lack of vacancy orders for workers of these ages (b) the reluctance of employers to consider them for employment

Realizing this situation, the Manager of the Toronto Employment Office in August 1948 appointed a liaison officer to devote his time to scanning all vacancy orders in all male selection units and attempt to place as many as possible of these older men who had been counselled. The energetic work of this officer produced results.

The fact that such an officer was essential proves conclusively that regular placement units are inadequate to deal with the placement of older workers - even after they have been interviewed extensively and classified regarding their most suitable jobs.

19. Examples of Individuals Who Secured Work After Counselling

- (a) A. B. - 69. Strong and virile man. 38 years with a large national firm - had risen from office boy to office manager. Reported to simplify and improve almost every business system with which he was associated. Unemployed eleven months.

After counselling, together with other recommendations, it was suggested, that he be a "resurrector of failing businesses."

With his morale restored, he immediately sold his services to a contracting firm engaged in the rapid building of houses. Because of his business ability and experience, he vitalized this business. One month after his appointment he became a Director of the firm; four months later he was made Vice-President!

- (b) C. D. - 55. A cultured, educated man. Had been South American sales representative for a British textile house. Since coming to Canada several years ago, fortune had not smiled upon him and he was greatly discouraged. Had been unemployed 16 months.

The counsellor suggested two widely different fields (1) where he had had experience, but was not too enthusiastic about doing - selling (2) because he was a careful, meticulous man, and was eager to do it, - proof reading.

Following counselling, he secured a position as salesman for gasoline-generated electric power plants. Because of the current electric power shortage in Ontario and because of his alertness, he is reaping a rich harvest of commissions. He is, however, looking keenly for a position as a proof reader!

- (c) E. F. - 63. A pleasant, co-operative woman, much discouraged because of her inability to obtain factory employment. Arthritis caused some discomfort in walking. Unemployed ten months.

As a hobby she was greatly interested in and did considerable knitting, crocheting and sewing. Counsellor suggested that she take samples of her work to some of the neighbourhood stores dealing with this type of merchandise. Three days later she reported that she had followed the suggestion and had obtained sufficient orders to keep her gainfully employed for two months and probably six months.

- (d) G. H. - 44. Superior ability. Had uniquely effective method of writing sales letters. Was employed with a firm where his talents were not appreciated. Counselling was requested because of insufficient income to meet expenses of home which necessitated wife working and consequent neglect of children. Applicant actually required encouragement to bolster his ambition.

Counsellor recommended that he sell advertising space with trade papers or do advertising work - copy work, sales letters, etc. With new confidence G. H. obtained a position selling advertising space. This nets him more than double his former earnings. Domestic problems have disappeared.

- (e) L. M. - 59. A clever, charming man with worthwhile experience in advertising business. Dual veteran - paymaster in army. Unemployed 15 months.

Counsellor recommended three possible occupations -
1. Industrial Research (Advertising); 2. Copy Writer (Advertising);
3. Paymaster.

After counselling he himself obtained a position in charge of the Research Department for a large advertising agency. This position pays \$200 per month.

P A R T II

INTEREST IN THE OLDER INDIVIDUAL

Interest in the older individual is gaining momentum with sociologists and social workers, but is making rather slower progress with employers and others concerned with employment. Social workers, however, assert that self-support, or employment, is the one vital essential in any program seeking to meet the needs of older individuals.

(a) Social Workers' Interest

The Council of Social Agencies of Chicago has just published the report of the first year's program of its Community Project for the Aged. The project is "primarily concerned with making possible a more meaningful and rewarding existence for men and women who have lived a long time". It asserts that "many of the older individuals have extraordinary vitality - mentally, physically, and emotionally. Many of them have talents and abilities which the years have strengthened and tempered rather than weakened and destroyed". The report concludes "It is clear that co-operative research and community planning must be directed towards the extension of opportunities for continuing work for older people".

The Welfare Council of Toronto in its Division of the Aged is concerned with all phases of life of the older individuals. It is very definitely making its influence felt as it seeks to meet their needs. The paramount importance of employment is recognized by the Division.

The Canadian Welfare Council recently announced that it was appointing committees to study three of the most urgent welfare considerations of the present time - one of these was the study of the needs of old people. Without doubt employment will be advanced as a vital necessity.

(b) The Specific Field of Employment

1. American National Committee

When we enter the field of those concerned definitely with employment of older individuals we meet an interesting fact: In March, 1939, a Committee made up of twenty representatives of national industries in the United States presented to Honourable Frances Perkins, then Secretary of Labour, a report on "Employment Problems of Older Workers". In it, the statement occurs - "Unthinking acceptance of the idea that workers of 40 or over are less desirable than younger workers has created a serious situation. An examination of factual data on productivity, accident, sickness, group insurance, and pension plans, has led us to the conclusion that there is little significant relationship between age and costs, and that the prejudice against hiring older workers rests largely on inadequate and erroneous impressions. We urge that everything possible be done to dispel the idea that workers are through after 40".

2. New York State Committee

Yet it was not until March 1948 that an all-out State attack on employment problems of the elderly was urged in a report presented to the Legislature of the State of New York by the Joint Legislative Committee on Problems of the Aged, the first state body to act. The committee reported that the main defects in employment procedures insofar as elderly workers are concerned are as follows:

- "(1) Wide-scale prejudice against hiring of the worker over 45.
- (2) Compulsory retirement of workers at 65 without regard to their ability to work.
- (3) Lack of job counselling for older workers, down-grading or 'trans-motion' of workers who are slowing down.
- (4) Lack of job analysis and classification work which enable industry to know jobs for which the elderly can be used profitably.
- (5) Inadequacy of existing industrial pension plans which sometimes thwart employment of the elderly, fail to provide an annuity sufficient to cover the cost of existence, and provide no protection for a long-time employee who is fired or wishes to resign before retirement age."

Practically the same conditions exist in Canada as are present in New York State - the same defects in employment procedure are to be found with the problem becoming acute in industrial sections of the country.

On December 9, 1948 a Public Hearing was held in New York City by the New York State Joint Legislative Committee on Problems of the Ageing. Leading authorities in the field of geriatrics, rehabilitation, pensions, and employment addressed Committee Chairman Senator Thomas C. Desmond, members of the Committee, invited guests and the public on the general subject "The Older Worker and Employment". As the Committee Chairman plans to introduce in the legislature two bills (a) to provide in the State Labour Department a job counselling service for older workers (b) a bureau to launch a permanent drive to expand employment of senior citizens, and since the Counselling Service for applicants over 45 years of age in Canada is regarded most favourably by the Committee, the head of the Adult Counselling Service, Toronto, was invited to address the hearing on the subject "Counselling Older Workers Can Succeed".

3. Aims and Efforts of the British Government

The broad aim of the Ministry of Labour and National Service is to help dispose of the idea that capability to perform a job depends on calendar age alone. It is thus felt that a worker should never be asked to retire simply because he has reached a certain age.

The government has endeavoured to give a lead in the matter. So far as temporary positions are concerned, there is now no age barrier to recruitment for government service. Moreover, the various departments have been instructed that "in view of the current man-power shortage, no officer who is efficient at his duty should be retired as long as he is willing to stay and there is real need for his services".

Again, to give each older individual throughout the nation an incentive to continue at work as long as he can, in place of retiring, anyone reaching pensionable age (men 65, women 60) on and after July 5th, 1948, is now able, by remaining in regular employment after that age, to qualify for an addition of one shilling per week to pension, when he or she eventually retires or attains the age of 70 (65 for women), for each 25 contributions paid after pensionable age.

In June of this year, the Minister of Labour wrote to the British Employers' Confederation, the Trade Union Congress, and the Co-operative Union outlining this policy and asking them to circularize their members about it. This they did. The Minister has also written to the appropriate Government departments asking for co-operation, in the campaign to retain elderly workers, from local authorities and nationalized industries. All Departments replied agreeing to do this.

P A R T III

THE PROBLEM AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Problem

Many persons really believe that middle-aged and elderly folk are slow to learn or to adjust. Certain employers, imbued with this idea, conjure up the most absurd "reasons" for failure to hire dependable and worthwhile workers:

"In the opinion of many employers the older worker increases costs and reduces output, thus narrowing the margin of profit. They argue that the older worker unduly boosts the costs of insurance schemes - - - - that the physical decline of age results in lessened productivity and a partial loss of skill. Despite the contrary evidence of the war years, when aging workers adjusted remarkably well and performed brilliantly, and contrary statistical evidence, this attitude persists to a large extent. It is an attitude which can have dire effects upon the older individual, the family and society as a whole. Denied employment, the worker becomes frustrated and embittered - - - And society loses an active, productive worker by reason of a chronological age which may bear no relation to his ability to perform a job well".

--Canada's "Health and Welfare" - September 1948

Consequently, applicants for employment over 45 years present a problem to the National Employment Service. The problem exists with both male and female applicants - yet is more acute with the former. Even in a time of high employment like the present, it has been found that job orders for older applicants are few. While the number of unplaced men and women over 45 years varies with individual offices, yet practically all offices face the same situation.

The Greatest Handicap of the Older Applicant

Admitting that there are prejudices against the employing of older persons, particularly in times when younger workers are plentiful, let us turn our attention to the applicant for employment over 45 years of age!

Without doubt the greatest handicap of the "over 45" seeking employment is his own acceptance of the belief that he is of little value. This belief is formed in his mind after repeated but unsuccessful attempts have been made to secure employment. Numerous employers, or their representatives, have told him politely but firmly that he is "too old" for the particular job; that they "wanted a younger man", etc. A feeling of being "unwanted" haunts him and he finally reaches the conclusion, "Probably, I'm through!" "What's the use of trying further?"

Frankly, there are certain occupations and activities for which a person of fifty or sixty is too old because of physical requirements. But the applicant must not feel that because he has become too old to handle a particular task that he is too old for everything. He must simply switch to a task within his abilities and limitations. The biggest problem of the older job seeker is to discover what he wants to do - what he can do best.

Strange as it may seem, the applicant often requires skilled help here. It is the rare individual who can analyze himself alone; rarer still is the individual who can analyze the jobs which age need not deter him entering or pursuing successfully.

Besides mapping out a constructive plan, the counsellors attempted in all their dealings with these older men and women, to imbue them with a realization of the true dignity of their worth. They were treated courteously. Real interest was shown in their stories of employment, leisure time activities, and interests. They were helped to think positively about their possible contributions to the world of work.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Continuation and Extension of the Specific Counselling of Older Applicants

This experimental venture of the National Employment Service - counselling older applicants, as shown in this report, has been amply justified (a) by the attention it has drawn to the problem, (b) more important, by the exceptional number of older individuals who were successful in obtaining employment after counselling.

Therefore, it is recommended that the counselling of older applicants be extended to those offices where the need is apparent: (a) to assist these individuals to re-orient themselves to changing conditions, (b) to help them to appraise themselves and to appreciate the true value of their assets, (c) to raise their morale.

Offices in the Ontario Region where the need is most apparent are as follows: Toronto, Hamilton, Windsor and Ottawa.

2. Specialized Placement

It is recommended that a placement service operate in conjunction with the Counselling of Older Applicants; that these placement officers have special training, and the ability to appreciate the older applicants' needs, and assets. They should, of course, know jobs and be able to make use of an effective counselling service.

3. A Follow-Up Procedure

A follow-up after placement is recommended. (a) to assist the older person to make any necessary adjustments subsequent to placement, (b) to relieve the employer of embarrassment when the employee is not suitable, (c) to appraise the work done, and through this appraisal, to develop a still better service.

This follow-up should be done by the placement officers or the counsellors.

4. A Specified Approach to Employers

A more definite approach to the leading executives of industry is required.

(a) To acquaint them with the findings of science regarding the older worker. One committee dealing with this problem reported - "when industry obtains the information about aging that is now available, but not widely distributed, it will gradually shift many of its current employment practices".

(b) To encourage industry to make surveys of occupations at present being carried on most efficiently by older workers; to enlarge these fields of occupations to include all jobs suitable for the older workers - so that in such vacancies the age requirement might be stated "must be over 50 years".

(c) To discover firms now aware of the work possibilities of older workers.

A growing number of firms are already aware of the true worth of middle-aged and older workers. Certain employers are eager to hire them. For example, a Toronto Taxi Company placed an order with National Employment Service for 60 drivers - over 45 years of age!

The discovery and listing of all such firms would fulfil a two-fold purpose:

(1) Encourage those dealing with older applicants and act as places of possible referral for these applicants.

(2) Encourage reluctant employers to be more intelligent and kindly disposed towards the older workers.

5. Expense of Counselling and Placement to be Considered Positively

The Toronto experiment did not cost the Commission any added expenditure. It meant re-assigning four Unemployment Insurance Commission employees from their regular duties to the Counselling Unit. However, if counselling expense is weighed against the saving in the cost of Unemployment Insurance Benefits, the value of counselling will be readily shown. Estimating the average weekly benefit at \$10 per person, the placement of 630 persons would amount to \$25,200 per month. This was many times the amount paid in salaries to the counselling staff.

Again the employment of these 630 individuals at the modest salary of \$30 per week means an added buying power to the community and country of approximately \$76,000 per month. If permanently placed it means upwards of one million dollars per year!

Judged by these standards, the expense of counselling is small indeed.