

will finally bring an end to the discrimination. The National Council of Senior Citizens is wholeheartedly behind this approach.

We sincerely hope that this committee will reject the plea made here yesterday by a witness for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, offering another public relations program instead of a Federal law. "To us," said the U.S. Chamber witness, "the problem can only be finally solved by an educational and public relations campaign designed to dispel the misconceptions * * * " et cetera.

The elderly need job opportunities, not public relations programs; they need retraining opportunities, not study commissions; they need a law which says there can be no discrimination because of age, not the same old voluntary system which has discriminated against them for many years. And our national economy demands enactment of these bills as much as the elderly needs them.

I suspect that the principal result of another public relations campaign would be to increase the employment of young public relations men.

If industry sells Congress on the idea that the problem can only finally be solved by a public relations program, I wonder how long it will be before the trade associations begin their new public relations programs to combat the Government's public relations program?

It is clearly essential that the legislation should make it unlawful for an employer to discriminate against any individual because of age, either with respect to wages, conditions, or benefits. Too often private employers have made the existence of minimal pension plans or health plans the subterfuge for not hiring the elderly worker.

Since the introduction of the medicare program there have been many changes in existing fringe benefits for older workers negotiated in collective-bargaining agreements—and the bargaining table is the proper place for seeking solutions to any problems which may arise.

I am sure it is perfectly capable of handling these problems in connection with any pension plans and in connection with any health programs.

There is evidence that a major deterrent to successful employment of the elderly has been lack of readiness of large proportions of the older work force for the kinds of jobs that are currently available.

This is often due to a lessening of physical powers as well as a lack of basic educational skills. In addition there may be emotional resistance toward job change, training, or relocation. To help overcome these deterrents there is a great need to develop, adapt, and apply techniques and information that can help deal effectively with the problems that are peculiar to older workers.

The education and research provisions of the legislation are essential if we are to change our costly prejudices against the older worker and give him a chance. America cannot afford the continuing waste of productive people who are not producing.

But methods of training older workers have not yet reached the level of refinement of the more traditional science of training children and adolescents.

This inadequacy is all the more remarkable at a time when the need to learn is no longer considered to terminate at the conclusion of school or university. To participate fully, freely, and productively in the economic and social development of America during their work life, adults must continually be acquiring new knowledge and new skills.