

An active manpower policy calls for the utmost flexibility in the use of human resources. Economic and technical development demand individual and group changes, not only from one occupation to another, but from one sector to another. To adjust to these changes in occupation, learning and relearning are essential.

There is growing evidence that learning and training are possible—even in the higher age groups—provided that the conditions necessary for such training are established and the methods used are suitably adapted to the ever-changing human capabilities and needs.

One of the areas which the National Council of Senior Citizens believes holds great promise is in promoting the training and utilization of the older worker as ancillary personnel such as home health aides, schoolteacher aides, neighborhood service worker, recreation worker aides, et cetera.

In providing outreach services to disadvantaged older persons for example, the use of trained indigenous older workers is particularly desirable because of their intimate familiarity with the life, culture, and special needs of the disadvantaged. The training and utilization of such subprofessional, supportive personnel should help meet the shortage of professional workers and provide the elderly with interesting and constructive employment.

Legislation now before both Houses of Congress which seeks to establish a Senior Citizens Community Service Corps is being earnestly supported by our affiliated groups in all States.

That concludes my statement, Mr. Chairman.

I want to say how much we support and welcome this bill and this legislation.

Mr. DENT. Thank you, sir. I noticed earlier in your testimony you touched on the fact that this legislation would be of little or no help individually and collectively to those whom you represent in the council.

However, you did bring out a very telling point in that the discrimination prior to the age of 65 makes it that much more difficult for those persons who have been discriminated against to be able to care for themselves after they are 65. The fact that you catalog the very important phenomena that took place after World War II when the scramble for jobs was such that the returning soldier not only had a claim on a job because of his services but he had added to that his youth. Therefore, at that time, we started, from my own experience in having studied this as a State senator, a real point at which industry, as such, started to have an age cutoff as a matter of hiring policy. That really took place after World War II.

Before that it was scattered in its use but after World War II age 40 became pretty much the determining age in employment in the mass production industries. And it is that group of elders now who are suffering from the fact that in those intermediate years between their work years and retirement years they lost their source of income or lost part of their source of their income because they had to take lesser paying jobs that found them in a position of being ill equipped for retirement, as it were, that was forced upon them.

It is to me a very grave indictment, and as you and I have argued before, we don't always follow the same line of logic, but I think it is a grave indictment on the social security system that one of the major points of amendment now being considered—and it has been considered by the committee on Ways and Means—is that they are going to allow