

Human Resources in Canada : Changing Attitudes and Roles

Les ressources humaines au Canada : évolution des attitudes et des rôles

George V. Haythorne

Volume 24, Number 4, 1969

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/028068ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7202/028068ar>

[See table of contents](#)

Article abstract

The author observes how Canadians have influenced and have been influenced by their environment and thus tries to understand more fully how, through individual and collective action, their participation, development and enjoyment in today's world may be more fully achieved.

Publisher(s)

Département des relations industrielles de l'Université Laval

ISSN

0034-379X (print)

1703-8138 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this article

Haythorne, G. V. (1969). Human Resources in Canada : Changing Attitudes and Roles. *Relations industrielles / Industrial Relations*, 24(4), 705–726.
<https://doi.org/10.7202/028068ar>

Human Resources in Canada: Changing Attitudes and Roles

George V. Haythorne

The author observes how Canadians have influenced and have been influenced by their environment and thus tries to understand more fully how, through individual and collective action, their participation, development and enjoyment in today's world may be more fully achieved.

The importance a country attaches to its human resources is determined by many forces. A war, a depression or a natural disaster tends to occur suddenly, threatening life and security. Such an event produces a strong sense of social involvement and deliberate group action. Other forces, though less dramatic, have equally profound effects on social, economic and political action over time. Directly or indirectly, all influence the roles played by human and material resources and the prevailing attitudes towards them.

Many other factors affect human behaviour and the ways individuals develop their potentialities and participate in the affairs of their country. Among these obviously are innate physical, mental and emotional capacities. But the manner in which these capacities are nurtured through their families, schools, community facilities, and customs has a potent influence on the way people act individually and collectively.

In Canada the combination of these various influences over the past century has produced some significant changes in the roles played by human resources and in the attitudes generally held towards them. Some of the forces stimulating these changes have occurred within the

HAYTHORNE, G. V., Commissioner,
Prices and Incomes Commission,
Ottawa, formerly Deputy Minister,
Canada Department of Labour.

country while others have operated on a broader international plane. Typically the forces, whether physical, economic, political, cultural or ideological, have acted together, not in isolation. Their intermingling has, in fact, often been more important in the total effect than the contribution of any one.

It is useful and often revealing to examine separately the impact of each of the principal forces on the life and development of a country over time. This has frequently been done in Canada. On this occasion the focus will be kept more on the interaction of the forces and on their total impact as they have helped to mould the broad patterns of behaviour of Canadians over recent decades. At the same time an attempt will be made to trace some of the principal ways in which the emerging needs of men and women in our Canadian society have been met. Changes will also be traced in attitudes towards the importance of increased investments in education and in the development of human resources generally as factors in economic and social growth. This review of the past will be followed by a discussion of current concerns and conflicts as they affect human resources. Finally, some observations will be made on what may be expected over the years ahead in further changes in the role of human resources and in attitudes generally held by Canadians. Throughout, in order to keep within reasonable limits, attention will be focussed primarily on the part human resources play in the functioning of the economy. The over-all objective will be to observe how Canadians have influenced, and have been influenced by their environment and thus to understand more fully how, through individual and collective action, their participation, development and enjoyment in today's world may be more fully achieved.

Early Settlement Preoccupations

A strong interplay between natural and human resources stands out sharply in the evolution of Canada. During the early years of our national existence much attention continued, of necessity, to be focussed in many parts of the country on meeting the immediate needs of survival. The formidable and never-ending task of our pioneers was to explore, harness and develop natural resources throughout a large and sparsely populated land. Frequently sheer physical force and endurance had to be pitted against nature. Inevitably early attitudes were greatly influenced by the need to conquer the rigours of land and sea ; to convert a wilderness into

a civilization. While this basic task continued, food, shelter and clothing were vital necessities, and the acquisition of these for most people consumed a large part of their time and energies.

Individuals were important, though they were largely taken for granted by each other in the overwhelming tasks in which they, their families and communities were engaged. The early settlers brought with them cultural and political attitudes which had a dominant influence on their behaviour. These frequently included a highly valued freedom from political and religious persecution or restricted job opportunities in their homelands.

The preoccupation with physical aspects of living continued throughout the nineteenth and for some, still in frontier areas, well into the twentieth century. The frequently expressed virtues of piety, individual initiative and hard work provided support in this basic task as did also the traditional emphasis on a laissez-faire approach in economic organization and practices. Collective action, when it occurred on a local basis, was in response to a basic human interest in helping each other. It was not something imposed or encouraged from outside.

In spite, however, of the prevailing emphasis on individual enterprise, some early breakthroughs occurred in the form of national economic programs. An early example of this was the completion of the first transcontinental railway in 1885 with substantial public financial support. Other important national policies introduced were free homesteads to settlers in Western Canada in 1872 as a means of encouraging agricultural development, and a national protective tariff in 1879 to help promote other industries. These national economic programs, which met the demands of interest groups with effective political power, were exceptions to the prevailing pattern of economic behaviour. Yet they too were undertaken in large part to encourage the development of individual initiative and enterprise. People, it was strongly felt should be free, particularly in a new country, to fend for themselves with a minimum of external control and assistance.

These broader measures in the economic field were accompanied by some initiatives in the social sphere although the latter, for many years, were less extensive. The deep-seated and widely accepted emphasis on individual action did not lend encouragement to those who began to feel the necessity of banding together to assert their collective strength

in order to improve their living and working conditions. Most industrial establishments were also small and widely scattered. Thus it is not surprising that at the time of Confederation, in 1867, there were few trade unions in Canada. Worker organizations were, in fact, liable at the time to charges of conspiracy in restraint of trade. This impediment to collective action was not removed until 1872 with the passage by Parliament of the Trade Unions Act and an amendment to the Criminal Code.

The growth of membership was slow even after unions were officially accepted. This was a further reflection of the dominant attitude of the day with the continuing emphasis on individual action and responsibility. Gradually governments were encouraged to take action on behalf of unprotected workers. The most notable example of this occurred in 1900 when protective measures were introduced covering working conditions on federal contracts. This followed enquiries which revealed deplorable situations in clothing and other establishments. Significantly, too, the federal Department of Labour was established in the same year, the first such Department in Canada. Factories Acts had previously been passed in Ontario and Quebec. Minimum employment standards were slowly extended under these and other similar legislation throughout the country.

Between 1900 and 1914 union membership increased more than tenfold from around 15,000 to over 150,000¹. In the face of this rapid growth, union-employer conflicts were inevitable, particularly since many employers remained strongly opposed to collective action in any form by their workers. Some serious strikes occurred, particularly in Western Canada. In order to assist the parties in reaching fair settlements and to ensure a fuller regard for the public interest involved, the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act was passed by the Parliament of Canada in 1907. This legislation required compulsory investigation of a dispute by a government appointed board before a strike or lockout could legally take place. This was a new principle which was to be extended in several important respects later.

Modest starts were also made in taking collective action on other social and economic matters in the early years of the century. In 1908 Parliament approved the sale of government -backed annuities to individual citizens as an encouragement to set aside savings for their old age. Although this marked only a small beginning in dealing collectively

1. *The Labour Gazette*, Department of Labour, Ottawa, vol. 50, September 1950, pp. 1391-3

with problems facing older persons, it, along with the fair wage principle on government contracts introduced earlier by Parliament in 1900, served as forerunners to later social and economic security programs. These included the adoption of the principle of collective responsibility to injured workers on the part of employers for the first time in the pioneer Ontario Workmen's Compensation Act of 1914, and of joint federal-provincial government responsibility for assistance to older workers in need under the Old Age Pensions Act of 1927.

There were other stirrings in these early years of the century when the movement of people away from the farms was starting, when immigration was high and when other industries were expanding, especially in growing urban centers. One of these was an increasing demand for federal assistance in training youths and adults in marketable skills. In response, a Royal Commission was named in 1910 to enquire into technical education in Canada and in other selected countries. This Commission, appointed by the Federal Government with the approval of the provincial Premiers, enunciated principles which were to serve as a basis for subsequent federal and provincial government participation in the development of human resources throughout the country.

Wartime Crisis

The outbreak of war in 1914, with its world-wide dimensions, produced many social and economic upheavals for Canadians. These involved severe pressures on human and other resources. Collective action of unprecedented character was required in dealing with manpower, with the allocation of food and supplies, with industrial production and with public finance. The allocation and training of men and women for the armed services and for war industries were at the center of this action. Once developed, the more orderly and planned approach to meeting the employment needs of both workers and employers was maintained and extended. This was done with the assistance of the federal Employment Service Co-ordination Act of 1918. The rapid development of industry during these years, as well as the urgent wartime manpower needs, hastened further action in technical education including provision under federal legislation in 1919 for an initial ten million dollars to be made available for this purpose to the provincial governments on a matching basis.

The widespread stimulus to production and prices of the war years and the sharp decline in both in the early twenties represented a typical

example of the boom and bust psychology still widely prevalent in Canada and elsewhere. The consequences of falling prices were particularly disturbing to Canadian farmers, faced with tough competition from producers in other countries. Dissatisfied with established marketing methods and practices and determined to make their voices heard, vocal agrarian movements begun earlier in the century now spread quickly across the land. This post-war crisis in agriculture, which Canadian rural people shared with those in other countries, led to a demand for a fair monetary return to the farmer for his efforts, co-operative marketing arrangements and the overthrow of traditional political parties. The United Farmers of Ontario and the United Farmers of Alberta each succeeded in forming provincial governments in 1919 and 1921 respectively. In the latter year, the Progressives — essentially a rural based party centered in the West — obtained sixty-five seats in the Canadian Parliament.

The disturbances of the war and post-war years produced important innovations in economic and social behaviour in Canada. These innovations were accompanied by a more conscious need for an organized approach to questions of social and economic security. Some visible signs of this had developed in Canada and the early work of the International Labour Organization and the League of Nations, both created in 1919, opened up important new avenues for organized action on a world scale. The principles of self-help and of individual, community and industry responsibility, even in matters of unemployment and welfare, were so deeply ingrained, however, that the attempts to deal with such matters in peacetime in Canada still rarely went beyond local or provincial levels of action.

The Black Thirties

The stock market crash in the fall of 1929 marked the beginning of a major world depression with serious unemployment, particularly on the American Continent. For Canadians the situation was aggravated still further by several drastic crop failures in the Prairie Provinces. Faced with severe economic and social disruptions, it was no longer possible to depend on self-help and local action. A much broader social involvement became imperative. Federal participation on an extensive scale was needed for the first time to help cope with economic and social problems not directly associated with a war. These problems centered around widespread unemployment, relief needs frequently of emergency propor-

tions, and serious financial situations facing many municipalities and some provinces.

New and untried measures were required during these difficult years. Co-operative federal-provincial relief projects were introduced and experimental training plans were begun for youth and jobless workers. Under these programs the earlier measures introduced in the operation of the Employment Service and technical education were substantially broadened. These early joint manpower programs, designed to bring a measure of relief to destitute workers and their families, were later to play a more vital role in the development and utilization of Canada's human resources.

The direct assistance given to the training of young and older workers during these years in effect extended their earlier primary and secondary schooling, long provided in most parts of Canada on a public or community-financed basis. There were many who still questioned such extensions of public authority and who thought it was sufficient for those unemployed in the cities to be cared for by charitable agencies or go back to the land. But desperate situations facing society call forth new and radical measures as we have seen was the case in Canada in the nineteen thirties.

It was not surprising either that these years of economic and social crisis gave rise to serious revaluations of existing political institutions. Several new political parties also emerged. One of these, — Social Credit advocated a sweeping new approach to monetary policies, and another, — the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, later to become known as the New Democratic Party, urged more public ownership of industrial and commercial enterprises and a planned approach to the functioning of the economy. These parties have each formed provincial governments: the former in Alberta in 1935 and in British Columbia in 1952; the latter in Saskatchewan in 1944 and in Manitoba in 1969.

Second Wartime Crisis

The deep disturbances and the discoveries of the depression years were followed, before being fully dealt with, by the pressures of a second World War crisis, beginning in September, 1939. Large surpluses of manpower were soon replaced by severe shortages. Both of these situations — representing extreme under-utilization of manpower on the one side and extreme over-utilization on the other — profoundly affected attitudes

towards human resources and their utilization. The concepts of laissez-faire and rugged individualism which prevailed in the earlier less organized and complex stages of development faded into the background in the face of the turmoil and disruptions of these crisis years. Some of the turmoil, it was now becoming clear, was related to a failure to deal with human problems in society and in the economy in a comprehensive and effective way. Some deep conflicts continued between traditional and contemporary attitudes. These stimulated searching examinations in economics, the other social sciences, ethics and religion. Out of these emerged new approaches to economic analysis including much greater participation by governments in developing and carrying out monetary, fiscal, manpower, industrial relations, price and welfare policies and programs.

The activities of political parties, both old and new, the growth of voluntary organizations including trade unions, and increased social research by universities and other bodies contributed to the development of these important new government initiatives in economic and social planning. There remained, however, many who opposed or questioned the wisdom of broader community and national action in seeking solutions to social and economic problems. The role that could be played by human resources through more broadly based education and through more enlightened group action, was still rather clouded and uncertain.

As the war progressed during the early forties Canadian society was shaken to its roots. Through sheer necessity Canada had quickly become an industrial nation and at the same time contributed over one million men and women to the allied Armed Forces or close to one-fifth of her total labor force at the time. The vastly increased and radically changed demands on the economy required broadly conceived and well executed production, price, trade and manpower plans. With a specific and widely accepted national goal and a sense of crisis always present, Canadians accepted with little hesitation controls on prices and incomes and an orderly allocation of workers. A greatly improved utilization of the labor force was also achieved and large numbers of women workers were brought into the functioning of the many parts of the economy for the first time.

The greatly increased involvement of Canadians in pursuing the immediate goal of putting an end to Nazi and Fascist aggression during these crucial years made them more aware of each other and of the necessity of pulling effectively together both at home and abroad. Manpower and human problems generally became recognized as matters of

vital concern. This was seen in several ways. Personnel policies in staffing and operating the Armed Services received greater attention than ever before. At the same time personnel and industrial relations officers were appointed in more of the larger plants and other establishments throughout the country. Training programs were extended, particularly in war industries, and concerted efforts were made for the first time by the government, employers and unions to promote sound labor relations through local joint union-management committees. The particular problems facing women workers were more widely appreciated and special measures were developed to help cope with them.

Another development which gave explicit recognition to the human factor in the functioning of the economy was a provision concerning collective bargaining, introduced under the Wartime Emergency Orders. Under a separate Order-in-Council, Number 1003, unions able to demonstrate they spoke for the majority of workers in a plant or establishment, were certified as bargaining units by a Wartime Labour Relations Board and, when so certified, the employers and unions concerned were required to negotiate with each other in good faith. This step, introduced in 1944, contributed to a rapid increase in membership of unions in Canada from 362,000 in 1940 to 724,000 in 1944². It meant many more workers were able to seek satisfaction in dealing with wages, working conditions and related problems through collective action rather than have to depend purely on initiatives which might or might not be taken by employers or governments.

The commencement of the national Unemployment Insurance and Allowances programs during these war years³ were significant further steps to provide, as a matter of right, minimum forms of national assistance to workers, when unemployed, and to all children. The enunciation of a full employment policy by the federal government and of planned post-war reconstruction programs to offset an anticipated recession, which did not occur, reflect still further the extent to which attitudes had moved in supporting collective action in a democracy. These national income support programs and the more widely accepted role of government in

2. *Labour Organization in Canada*, 57th edition, Economics and Research Branch, Canada Dept of Labour, Ottawa, 1968, p. XI.

3. The Unemployment Insurance Act was passed in August 1940, following an amendment to the B.N.A. Act; the program began to function in July 1941. The Family Allowances Act was passed in August 1944; the first cheques were issued in July 1945.

developing broad economic and social policies grew naturally out of the pressures of the thirties and forties and paved the way for more broadly based schemes for old age security and pensions. In earlier years, persons needing assistance had to depend for help on other members of their family or on local charity. Some of this dependence was now reduced with increased mobility and more apartment living. These changes, but mainly a growing recognition of the need for broad provincial and national involvement, greatly diminished the earlier reliance on family support and on local community institutions.

The Pace of Post-War Changes

Born in large part out of wartime imperatives, scientific and technological innovations soon began to have profound effects on the economy and society generally. At first though, automation and other forms of technological change were opposed by many workers because of the fear that such innovations would take away jobs. This led to difficult and sometimes protracted industrial conflicts. Now that experience has shown technological changes bring with them on the whole more rather than less employment and that they are important contributors to higher productivity, unions are no longer opposed to them, but they do insist that adequate measures are taken to protect those workers adversely affected.

The far-reaching shifts in industrial production, with their direct impact on manpower requirements, have focussed greatly increased attention on technical education. Not only do tradesmen today require higher skills in performing their work, but the general level of technical knowledge needed in most industries has risen with the rapid increase in the use of electronic, computer and other complex technical equipment.

These developments have also pointed up the necessity for improved basic education for both youth and adult workers. In 1960, over forty percent of the members of the Canadian work force still had no more than primary school education⁴. A high proportion of youth, moreover, was continuing to drop out of school before completing secondary education. Faced with these realities and a shrinking supply of skilled workers available through immigration, with stepped-up manpower demands in Europe

4. *Labour Force Survey*, Feb. 1960, *Census of Canada*, 1961.

and elsewhere, strong measures were required. Through the initiative of the federal government and with an effective working partnership gradually developed with the provincial governments, it was possible to move ahead rapidly in the early sixties with a substantial expansion in the facilities for technical education and for generally upgrading the basic education required for skill development. This program was, moreover, a clear expression of the growing conviction on the part of all governments, employers and unions that a larger proportion of our annual national income must be spent on the development of our human resources, not just during youth but all through life.

Scientific and technological developments are having many other far-reaching effects on society. They are clearly reflected in the form and content of communications, in medicine and in health and in changing individual attitudes and beliefs. The pace of these developments is also forcing a critical examination of institutional objectives, of their basic concepts and of the effects of social forces on the individual. New directions have been introduced more slowly in some institutions than in others, but it is now generally accepted that it is no longer sufficient for man to be left to himself. Not only must he be aware of and responsive to his total environment for his own fullest development, but he must also be aware that many human problems in our increasingly interdependent world can only be resolved through collective community, national or international action.

Current Concerns and Conflicts

During the last three decades, the development of human resources has been the object of many deliberate public and private national, provincial and local programs in Canada. This represents a significant change from earlier years when the exploitation and development of physical resources were the dominant preoccupations. This shift in emphasis from physical to human factors has important implications for potential national growth and for international co-operation. It has also posed many current concerns and conflicts with which Canadians have to reckon.

One of these concerns centers around the difficulty of drawing a clear line between individual and group responsibilities. The necessity for individual initiative and the acceptance by men and women of a basic responsibility for their own development and decision-making remain

paramount. At the same time collective action in providing education, employment, income, health, recreation and welfare is recognized as imperative for a healthy economy and society.

Thus we have a greatly increased interest in manpower, income, industrial relations, health and welfare policies and programs. These programs, stimulated in part by rapid changes in technology requiring, in turn, increased adaptability in human resources, are significantly shaping economic and social growth. Investments in education, health, recreation, and welfare facilities have come to be regarded as an important dynamic element in national economic growth. Such investments must, however, leave ample room for individual resourcesfulness and creativity.

There are other conflicts, some of them of a basic nature, which make it difficult, but not impossible, to achieve our over-all goals of human resource development and utilization. These exist for many reasons springing from such deep-seated factors as : divisions of responsibility among different levels of public authority ; differences in cultural, language, race and regional backgrounds ; and wide variations in patterns of rural and urban living. These conflicts must be taken into consideration in working out common approaches in tackling common problems related to human resources.

Union-management relations, in which human considerations are of central concern, are occupying a steadily more important place in our Canadian society. They involve greater participation not only of workers and employers but also of governments. Conflicts over issues, where there are strong differences of interest continue to occur when collective agreements are negotiated. Such conflicts usually help to clear the air for all concerned and produce positive results. Governments at all levels have greatly improved their ability to assist the parties in resolving their conflicts. This assistance is especially important when there is a strong public interest involved. The objective is not to remove differences of view which are bound to arise in collective bargaining but, rather, to increase understanding and enlightenment so that the parties themselves are in a better position to resolve them.

The increased importance to the economy of decisions reached through collective bargaining brings with it the need of a clear definition and an understanding of the respective roles performed by those at various levels of responsibility within employer, union and government circles.

Improved communications within and among the three groups are also needed. These are most effective when the parties have earned full acceptance from each other and from citizens generally. There are many obstacles to overcome but communications improve as unions become fully accepted as having a significant part to play in collective bargaining, in the development and utilization of human resources and in other facets of the economy and society.

Responsible and respected management and union groups are in fact having an effective voice outside of their traditional immediate concerns. The increased participation of representatives of unions and employers in broad economic and social programs through joint committees, councils and other bodies ensures a greater degree of industrial democracy and greatly assists public authorities in developing and carrying out sound policies. This has been encouraged in Canada and elsewhere through the tripartite activities undertaken and sponsored by the International Labour Organization in its efforts to advance peace through social justice, including the improvement of living and working conditions for men and women everywhere.

Government action has been needed and will continue to be needed to protect workers not organized in unions and to help ensure that the environment in which all Canadians work and live is steadily improved. Moreover, with the radical changes taking place in our economy and in our social institutions, farreaching revisions are being made in legislation and the need for more is becoming increasingly apparent.

The Years Ahead

Although much has been achieved over the past century, Canadians are conscious of being members of a country still young and relatively new. Most industries have changed radically since earlier days but they are still growing and expanding. Productivity and incomes have improved greatly. In nearly all branches of the economy ownership has become concentrated in fewer hands. The role of managers has increased while that of owner-employers has declined. International economic relations have become more complicated and Canada's dependence on these has not diminished. Unions have become stronger but occupations and jobs have become more depersonalized. In general economic progress, although uneven, has been realized across the country, with the result that most

Canadians today enjoy much higher material standards of living than their forefathers in 1867 dreamed would be possible.

What can be expected over the years ahead? With the role of human resources occupying a more dominant position in the economy, working and living conditions can be expected to improve with disparities among regions and economic sectors diminishing. Far-reaching changes can also be expected in many economic and social institutions. In the past, the evolution of industrial and business structures has, on the whole, coped well with emerging production problems and ensured a reasonably satisfactory functioning of the economy. Meanwhile, however, human problems have not always received the attention they require. This fact, and the wartime and depression crises, have prompted on occasions, as we have seen, more broadly based community action. Moreover, the pursuit of immediate economic goals has not ordinarily taken into consideration community, national or world needs. Thus our economic system, while successful in promoting an affluent society for an increasing number of Canadians, has required increasing amounts of public participation to provide needed investments in social capital and a broader and more equitable sharing of the fruits of economic progress.

Economic decisions, while continuing to play a dominant role in the years ahead, can be expected to be tested increasingly against the requirements of the country and the world as a whole. Increasing concern is being expressed about the wide gaps between rich and poor not only within the nation but between nations. To narrow them significantly will require bold and imaginative action.

Canada has actively participated through the I.L.O. in the development of international labor standards. She has also helped to promote multi-national trading arrangements and world-wide technical co-operation programs. These and many other national and international pre-occupations inevitably bring governments more actively into the economic fields. They represent a healthy development as long as it is recognized that economic growth is the servant and not the master of men, and that governments must increasingly speak for all men and women everywhere.

Canadians have, moreover, reached today a wider consensus than ever before on such major national economic and social goals as high employment, reasonable price stability, increased productivity, and im-

proved living standards⁵. This is a positive gain. We still have ahead of us the translation of these goals into appropriate and effective industrial, regional and local action and their reconciliation with international economic and social objectives.

As we do so and as technological changes and productivity improvements occur, human resources will be called upon to play an even more important role in determining the directions of our economy. Paradoxically, they are likely to play, at the same time, a diminishing role in the operation of the economy.

In the past as technology has taken over more and more of the physical tasks of society, manual work has sharply diminished. Occupations in future can be expected to continue to change rapidly, with men and women having to adjust to many differing working and living situations during their lifetimes.

Thirty years ago most employees on assembly lines found little in their jobs to spark their imaginations or even capture their interest. Today automated equipment and computers are reducing still further the ability of workers to control their tools and the opportunity to gain satisfaction from providing a distinctively personal touch to their jobs. Their actions are being predetermined more and more by electronic and other machines. The responsibility on the relatively few who develop and direct the use of the machines is increasing correspondingly. For many others, what they do outside work has become much more important in life than the actual performance of their jobs. This means more attention is required to environmental factors in the plant or establishment, attitudes of workers towards their jobs, the attitudes of others towards them, and particularly their activities outside working hours. These changes are already posing far-reaching questions. When individual workers or groups of workers are powerless to control machines for their own satisfaction or benefit, how can this task be performed for the benefit of society as a whole?

5. *First Annual Review*, Economic Council of Canada, December, 1944.

On page one of this Review, the economic and social goals, as incorporated in the Council's terms of reference, are stated briefly as: « full employment, a high rate of economic growth, reasonable stability of prices, a viable balance of payments, and an equitable distribution of rising incomes. »

Under these changing circumstances the educational, welfare and religious institutions in our society all become crucially important. They need to be realistic in their approach to economic and social matters but clearly their primary task is to serve human needs. To achieve this under the dynamic conditions facing society requires a continuous re-appraisal of their purposes, objectives and programs.

Inevitably the changes in our working environments place greater importance on the quality of living and this tests the fibre of both individuals and institutions. The quality of work continues to be important but work itself is not likely to dominate the lives of men and women to the same extent as in the past. More and more people will be able to draw on the benefits achieved by the economy and society as a whole in pursuing other objectives. Work performed can be expected to remain important but will likely be judged more in the future in relation to one's total behaviour in society. Rewards will continue to be related to work done but hopefully this will entail more attention paid to contributions made to the community as a whole than has been the case in the past. At the same time, the pursuit of material gains is bound to remain the dominant aim for some people with an insistence on their personal rights more important than the discharge of their responsibilities to society.

The traditional roles of employers, unions and governments in Canada are coming closer together, with each retaining its distinctive place and a large measure of freedom to exercise its responsibilities democratically. Joint consultation among management, unions and government is increasing and management and unions are reaching joint decisions with greater appreciation of the necessity to consider the wider impact of these decisions. This trend can be expected to continue with both parties recognizing to an increasing extent the vital role of human resources both as participants in and as benefactors of a growing and healthy economy.

Employers and unions are likely to be called upon increasingly to give an accounting of the discharge of their responsibilities to society as a whole. As long as society has not found a viable alternative to free collective bargaining some work stoppages due to unresolved disputes can be anticipated. Practical ways of minimizing disruption and losses resulting from such stoppages will be needed and, when they interfere seriously with broader community or national interests, they will have to

be brought to an end or not allowed to occur, with other means found to help resolve issues remaining in dispute.

Governments can be expected to play the key role in sustaining economic growth. This involves consideration of the costs to society of failure to maintain economic progress on both a national and regional basis as well as of the positive measures needed to achieve steady economic and social development. It also means more attention to income maintenance programs co-ordinated with appropriate measures to improve the contributions to their communities of those in receipt of assistance under these programs.

Many local economic and social issues will continue to arise with solutions to them more readily achieved when seen in the perspective of broader and sometimes more pressing national and international problems. Human resources which have come to have an important place in economic planning will likely become more dominant. This will likely be reflected in shorter hours of work per day and per week, longer annual vacations, rising and more secure incomes for all workers, with greater equity among them, and a fuller sharing of responsibilities between men and women with respect to employment, their homes, their families, and their communities.

Schools, universities and other educational institutions will become more and more concerned with preparation for living while not neglecting the necessity of preparation for work. This will permit greater flexibility in educational courses, including wider recognition of the particular needs of individual students as being more important than imparting knowledge.

The attitudes and aims of society as a whole are bound to be sharply influenced as Canadian objectives become more identified with world objectives. Some of our contemporary cultural, ideological, linguistic and regional differences are likely to alter in significance as we adopt a more global view. This will involve participation in many more international obligations. It will also mean assisting with the creation and execution of both short and long range plans of developing countries. These countries have extensive human and physical resources which, because of their weak position economically, can easily be exploited. This has occurred in the past when resources have been developed to benefit externally based enterprises with relatively little concern for the country involved of its citizens.

It is not enough for these countries to be left in today's world to the slow and largely unplanned economic and social evolution Canada has experienced. Lessons learned in the process of our own development and that of other countries need to be examined for the benefit of people in these new countries as well as ourselves.

As our obligations as citizens of the world increase, Canada and other countries are likely to be more involved in world-wide decision-making and action. International disputes and conflicts will continue but, as mankind moved towards a greater degree of world government, more reliance is likely to be placed on mutually accepted practices and procedures and less on sheer economic or military power struggles.

A greater interchange of world culture will force more searching analysis of different ideologies and beliefs. Separate traditions, creeds and institutional structures have in the past overshadowed common human values. It is differences in doctrines and outer forms, not in basic values, that ironically have often led to serious cleavages and disputes over the centuries. Today there is some evidence of a greater search for a deeper meaning in life. This is seen in part in the revolt of youth through « hippie » and other groups.

Totalitarian regimes proclaim the beliefs and goals of their citizens. When this occurs such pronouncements, even though they may offend profoundly human values, become the prime objective. On such a basis countries and governments have attempted to defend economic exploitation, territorial expansion, destruction of property, and even mass killings. Such approaches and attitudes continue to pose grave questions for the future of man and of all human resources, especially when the risk of suicide at the hands of man's scientific perfections is now a stern reality.

The chances of escaping from this will be increased to the extent that human beings everywhere resolve to respond fully and responsibly to the demands of their environment as they become known, whatever they may be, rather than depend solely on goals or values that have been predetermined for them. This does not mean discarding values but, rather, acquiring a valid basis on which values can be judged and made a vital part of life. Such an approach is more than mere pragmatism and entails much greater demands on individuals than simply following predetermined values of truths, as countless millions have done down through the centuries in the name of religion or of political ideologies.

It puts moreover an emphasis squarely on the importance of following sound methods or processes which in turn can lead to sound results, rather than vice versa.

The recognition that individuals can and do become more mature and can enjoy more rounded and effective lives when they respond freely to the realities of the world about them requires some fundamental changes in the orientation of many educational, political, social and religious programs. Economic, cultural and other conditions frequently stand in the way of achieving these changes but nothing short of them will liberate men and women from their prejudices, short-sightedness and essentially self-centered behaviour, — behaviour which inevitably results in serious clashes, economic and social waste, and war.

Conflicts between individuals and groups, whether they be based on economic, ideological or other grounds, will not be eliminated — nor should they be. Progress and productivity in human affairs are, in fact, frequently achieved as much through the expression of sharp differences of views as though mutual agreement. Through the resolution of conflicts, new insights are often discovered beneficial to all. The attitude or basic approach when entering a conflict or any other situation is what matters most.

Conclusion.

What stands out sharply as one stands back and observes what has been happening in Canada over the course of a century is the growth in our collective determination and capacity to cope with economic and social problems. It is also clearly apparent that plans and programs profoundly affecting human resources have been able to surface at certain periods in our national development which could not have been floated successfully at others.

There remain many obstacles in the fuller development and utilization of our human resources, but it is significant that there is a greater general recognition of the necessity to tackle these obstacles boldly and effectively than was the case even twenty-five years ago. The solutions required depend to an increasing extent on the development and refinement of appropriate collective tools, but the actions of individuals, taking advantage of advances in social and medical science, in technology, in standards of living, and in education, remain of crucial importance.

LES RESSOURCES HUMAINES AU CANADA : ÉVOLUTION DES ATTITUDES ET DES RÔLES

L'importance qu'attache un pays à son capital humain est déterminée par de nombreux facteurs. Certains de ceux-ci, par exemple les guerres, les crises économiques et les désastres naturels, qui menacent la vie et la sécurité, se produisent d'habitude subitement et occasionnent un fort sentiment de participation sociale. D'autres, qui sont toutefois moins dramatiques, produisent à la longue des effets tout aussi profonds en raison de l'influence qu'ils exercent sur les rôles joués par les ressources humaines et matérielles et sur les attitudes qui prédominent à leur égard.

Ces rôles et attitudes ont subi de nombreux changements significatifs au Canada au cours des récentes décennies. Un examen de ces changements et des facteurs qui ont contribué à les produire permet de comprendre plus clairement le stade auquel nous sommes maintenant parvenus et les voies probables de l'orientation future.

L'évolution du Canada s'est faite sous le signe d'une forte interaction entre les ressources humaines et matérielles. Au cours des décennies antérieures, beaucoup d'attention a été, par nécessité, concentrée sur la survivance ainsi que sur la garantie que les ressources matérielles du pays répondaient aux besoins humains.

La préoccupation à l'égard des aspects matériels de l'existence a persisté tout au long du dix-neuvième siècle et pendant une partie assez grande du vingtième. De temps en temps des programmes économiques et sociaux d'envergure étaient introduits mais il s'agissait véritablement d'exceptions à la norme de comportement individuel et local largement acceptée, basée sur l'effort personnel, l'application au travail et une attitude de laissez-faire en matière économique.

Peu à peu, à mesure que le pays s'est développé et les relations économiques sont devenues plus complexes, les gouvernements ont été appelés à jouer un rôle de plus en plus important, d'abord en aidant à établir des règles acceptables de comportement en vue d'empêcher l'exploitation et l'abus des êtres humains dans la course aux gains économiques et, plus tard, à participer activement en aidant à élaborer et à mettre en oeuvre des programmes d'ordre économique et social. Cette orientation nouvelle de la participation des gouvernements a été largement accélérée par les deux crises des périodes de guerre et par la période prolongée de grave dépression économique des années trente.

Dans tous ces événements, on remarquait l'accent croissant qui était mis sur l'importance des ressources humaines et sur la nécessité de façonner la main-d'oeuvre, les relations industrielles et les programmes connexes en fonction principalement des besoins humains plutôt que des besoins matériels.

Le rythme rapide de l'évolution technique a manifestement eu de grandes répercussions sur l'économie et sur la société en général. Il a touché de façon profonde les conditions de travail des Canadiens et a eu une influence marquée sur leurs heures de loisirs. Il a été également un facteur important contribuant à l'initiative prise par le gouvernement fédéral, travaillant en association efficace avec les gouvernements provinciaux, visant à réaliser une expansion sensible des moyens d'enseignement technique au cours des années soixante.

Ce programme était une manifestation évidente de la conviction croissante, de la part de tous les gouvernements, employeurs et syndicats, qu'une proportion plus importante de notre revenu national annuel devrait être consacrée au développement de nos ressources humaines, non seulement pendant la jeunesse mais tout au long de la vie.

L'accroissement de l'action collective en vue de régler des questions économiques et sociales a donné lieu à nombre des préoccupations et conflits actuels. Parmi eux on peut compter la difficulté qui se manifeste à faire une nette distinction entre les responsabilités des particuliers et celles des groupes, la nécessité d'en arriver à définir et à comprendre plus clairement les rôles et responsabilités nouveaux des employeurs, des syndicats et des gouvernements, et la détermination des moyens permettant aux organismes bénévoles de contribuer au mieux possible à une société nationale et internationale qui a beaucoup changée et évolue rapidement.

Que peut-on prévoir dans les jours à venir? Les décisions économiques, tout en restant un facteur dominant, seront probablement mises à l'épreuve de plus en plus en fonction des besoins du pays et du monde dans son ensemble. Face à la préoccupation croissante à l'égard des larges écarts entre les riches et les pauvres au Canada, sur notre continent et dans le monde entier, des initiatives hardies et ingénieuses sont requises.

Le Canada a pris une part active, par l'intermédiaire de l'O.I.T., à l'élaboration de normes internationales de travail, à l'introduction de dispositions commerciales multi-nationales et à des programmes et collaboration technique sur une base mondiale. Ces préoccupations, ainsi que bien d'autres dans les domaines national et international, ont inévitablement pour effet une participation plus active des gouvernements au secteur économique. Elles représentent une évolution saine pourvu que l'on reconnaisse que la croissance économique est le serviteur et non le maître des hommes, et que les gouvernements doivent de façon croissante parler au nom de toute l'humanité.

Bien que les Canadiens aient atteint aujourd'hui à un consensus plus large que jamais à l'égard des objectifs économiques principaux, soit un haut niveau de l'emploi, une stabilité raisonnable des prix, une productivité accrue et un niveau de vie amélioré, il reste encore beaucoup à accomplir avant que ces buts soient convertis en des initiatives appropriées et efficaces sur le plan industriel, régional et local et réconciliés avec des objectifs internationaux, sociaux et économiques.

Comme la technologie s'acquitte d'une part de plus en plus grande des tâches de la société sur le plan matériel, le travail sera accompli de moins en moins par les êtres humains. À mesure que cette situation se précise, la tâche qui incombe aux particuliers et à la société, soit celle d'ouvrir la voie à un plus grand nombre d'autres activités créatrices, croît en importance.

Les rôles traditionnels des employeurs, des syndicats et des gouvernements se rapprochent, chacun gardant toutefois sa place distincte et une large mesure de liberté à exercer ses responsabilités de façon démocratique. On demandera de plus en plus aux employeurs et aux syndicats de rendre compte à la société dans son ensemble de la façon dont ils se sont acquittés de la charge qui leur incombe.

On peut s'attendre à ce que les gouvernements jouent un rôle de premier plan dans le maintien de la croissance économique, en prêtant une plus grande attention au coût qui résulterait pour la société si l'on ne réussissait pas à maintenir le progrès économique tant sur le plan national que régional ainsi que les mesures positives nécessaires en vue d'en arriver à un développement économique et social soutenu.

Les écoles, les universités et les autres institutions d'enseignement s'occuperont de plus en plus de préparer les gens à la vie dans son ensemble sans toutefois négliger la nécessité d'une préparation pour le travail.

Forcément les attitudes et les buts de la société dans son ensemble seront profondément influencés à mesure que les objectifs canadiens s'identifient de plus en plus avec des objectifs mondiaux. Des échanges plus importants entre les cultures du monde rendront obligatoire l'élaboration d'analyses plus profondes des différentes idéologies et croyances et auront pour résultat de faire mieux apprécier les éléments communs.

Les buts précis et immédiats des gouvernements totalitaires, sont fréquemment considérés comme des formes de vérité absolue. Lorsque cette situation se produit, de tels buts, bien qu'ils aillent profondément à l'encontre de valeurs humaines fondamentales, tendent à devenir l'objectif principal.

Les chances d'échapper à cette situation s'accroîtront dans la mesure où les êtres humains en tous lieux se résoudront à satisfaire entièrement et sérieusement aux exigences de leur milieu à mesure que celles-ci se font connaître, quelles qu'elles soient, plutôt que de dépendre uniquement de buts ou de valeurs qu'on leur a déterminés à l'avance.

Les conflits entre des particuliers et des groupes ne seront pas éliminés ; ils ne devraient pas d'ailleurs l'être. Le progrès et la productivité dans les affaires humaines sont, en fait, fréquemment réalisés autant par l'expression de divergences marquées de vues que par des accords réciproques. Ce qui compte le plus, c'est l'attitude ou l'approche de base lorsqu'on entre dans un conflit ou toute autre situation.

Ce qui ressort clairement, si l'on observe de façon impartiale ce qui s'est passé au Canada au cours d'un siècle, c'est la croissance de notre détermination et de notre capacité collectives à résoudre les problèmes économiques et sociaux. De plus, il est évident que des plans et programmes influant profondément sur les ressources humaines qui ont pu être mis en oeuvre à certaines époques de notre évolution nationale n'auraient eu aucun succès à d'autres moments.

Le développement et l'utilisation plus complets de nos ressources humaines restent entourés de nombreux obstacles ; il est toutefois significatif que la constatation générale de la nécessité de s'attaquer à ces obstacles de façon audacieuse et efficace est plus grande qu'il y a vingt-cinq ans par exemple. Les solutions requises dépendent dans une mesure croissante de l'élaboration et du perfectionnement des instruments collectifs appropriés ; les initiatives de particuliers se prévalant des progrès de la science sociale et médicale, de la technologie, du niveau de vie, et de l'éducation restent toutefois d'une importance décisive.