

ABSTRACT

"To care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan."

President Lincoln in his Second Inaugural Address to the American people indicated the importance of caring for the Nation's veterans with the above statement. These words spoken by President Lincoln reflect the philosophy and principles that are associated with the need to care for the soldier which attempt is no way restricted to the people of America but Nations everywhere. The importance of caring for war veterans who have become disabled in the protection of their motherlands also defines the innermost characteristics of a society and highlights the values that sustain it. Further, it gives a glimpse of urgency to guide those disabled and their families to have a secured future that was shattered in the performance of a noble cause, a cause that merits not sympathy but gratitude. It's a cause that does not merit pity or commiseration either. What really matters is how; how to serve those who have served. This Dissertation intends to speak a new way to care the disabled soldier; through rehabilitation.

Rehabilitation is one of the alternatives designed to facilitate the recovery to as normal a condition as possible. It allows the disabled to be independent from others and continue to have a life of his own. According to WHO, rehabilitation is a comprehensive and co-ordinated effort requiring application of medical, educational, societal, and vocational resources with the aim of allowing persons affected by impaired functioning to lead a life at its highest level. A proper and adequate rehabilitation program can reverse many disabling conditions or can help patients to

cope with deficits that cannot reverse by medical care. Most interestingly, we need to ask ourselves whether we have managed to put forward a comprehensive and a co-ordinated effort in establishing a proper and an adequate rehabilitation program for those disabled soldier who have sacrificed their today to have a better tomorrow for others and the generations yet unborn. This dissertation intends to discuss the present disabled soldier rehabilitation programmes in military institutions, programmes in the Srilanka Army in particular, and analyses critically its shortcomings. It does not intend to point a finger and hold anyone responsible for failures in the system since the responsibility does not only lie on the hand of any particular individual. It needs to be a co-ordinated effort and therefore, is a responsibility of each and every citizen in this country, the same way the people in most countries does, to ensure that a consorted effort is taken to care for those people who have served the nation.

Failure to establish proper and adequate rehabilitation programmes for disabled soldiers have created many problems. While the society suffers due to increase crime rate where a relationship of soldier involvement has been substantially proven, due to ignorance of psychological disorders as a result of traumatic events the soldier experience in battlefield and the failure to muster new and young blood to the ranks and files in to war mechanism as a sequel to neglect of soldier welfare has severely undermined the effort in waging a protracted war with one of the deadliest terrorists organisations, disabled soldier continues to suffer due to absence of a proper rehabilitation program. The absence of a proper vocational rehabilitation training has also resulted the disabled soldier being prevented from contributing his expertise and talent towards the development of the country while the lack of legal instruments denying the rights and continue to multiply the burden and plights to already shattered life style of the disabled soldier.

Though, rehabilitation is intended to bring back the lost abilities of a disabled person through a carefully designed process, it can end up in creating more problems than providing a solution if the process is not co-ordinated and principles are not applied. Therefore, this dissertation discusses a new way on rehabilitation of the disabled soldier.