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Box 77, Folder 4, Aging, 1981.

the
White House
Conference
on
Aging

330
Independence
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Washington,
D. C.
20201

Feb. 6, 1981

Rabbi Tanenbaum:

Here is the redrafted version of the Executive Summary.

I will contact you on Monday regarding the procedure
for distribution to the committee and guest
experts for their reaction and input.

Hopefully several sections will not have to be
redone—namely, major findings and key
issues ^{which} probably can stand for the final report
with any changes or amendments submitted by
the committee.

Best wishes,

Murphy



Prepared by Marlene L. Johnson

2-6-81

DRAFT

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON CREATING AN AGE-INTEGRATED SOCIETY--IMPLICATIONS FOR
THE MEDIA

I. INTRODUCTION

X
Older Americans have a bad image. It's an image they do not deserve, but one which results from the youth cultism in this country and the dissemination by the mass media of negative perceptions of growing old.

I
Congress apparently recognizes the socializing function of the mass media and its power to influence opinions, values and attitudes of society at large and individual citizens in particular. In the enabling legislation for the 1981 White House Conference on Aging, Congress mandated that a policy be developed to overcome false stereotypes about older persons.

Toward that end a technical committee was established to explore personal and societal implications for the media in an intergenerational context. Media and aging was one of seven issue areas examined under the rubric "Creating an Age-Integrated Society," a phrase which lends itself to both short and long term perspectives.

In preparation for the 1981 White House Conference on Aging, the Technical Committee on Media addressed four major themes:

- the influence of the media in forming and perpetuating cultural values and role models and in changing society's values by fostering constructive relationships between older persons and other age groups.
- the role of older people as consumers of the content of the media.
- the role of older people as participants in producing the education, information and entertainment content in the media, and
- the impact of new media technologies on the lives of older people.

The Committee also focused on several side issues which emerged during discussions of the key areas, namely (1) the forces which act on the media to control it; (2) age discrimination in employment as practiced by the media; and (3) how the media treats racial and ethnic minorities, women, and rural and poor older persons.

The Committee convened four all-day meetings between July, 1980 and January 1981 to identify pertinent issues; gather appropriate academic background materials on older people and the media; consult with media executives and experts in new media technologies and summarize insights, findings and policy recommendations for inclusion in its report to Conference delegates. Two subcommittees were formed and charged with the responsibility of preparing background information as a jumping off point for the Committee's deliberations. The Subcommittee on Stereotypes conducted a review of the literature in the field to determine what, if any research had been done on portrayal of older persons in the media. The committee was presented with a document entitled "Stereotyping of the Elderly in the Mass Media: A Review of the Literature," as prepared by Kathleen Jamieson, and another entitled "Age Stereotyping and the Media," prepared by Lydia Bragger.

The Subcommittee on New Media Technology prepared a brief background paper entitled "Cable Television Programs for Older Adults." (Marron, 1980) The committee called in experts on new media technology to present up to date information on the communications industry.

Media executives representing television, print, advertising, marketing and research were invited to a similar one day meeting which was designed to sensitize them to the issues of aging and discuss what the media could do to help change society's negative attitudes toward aging.

II. MAJOR FINDINGS

A. Stereotyping in the Mass Media:

Based on the survey of academic literature and the Committee's deliberations, the following findings emerged:

- Little attention has been paid to the portrayal of older persons, aging, and issues of concern to older persons in television news, public broadcasting, documentaries, game shows, talk shows and most children's programming.
- Stereotypes in radio, cable television, specialized journals, textbooks, films, and newspapers ^{have} has not been examined in depth.
- There is no solid evidence to explain why older ^{persons} characters are underrepresented in the mass media.
- There has been no systematic analysis of reasons why older persons consume more news and public affairs programming than most other age groups.
- Media coverage of issues of concern to older persons, such as mandatory retirement, social security, nursing home regulations, etc., has not been analyzed.

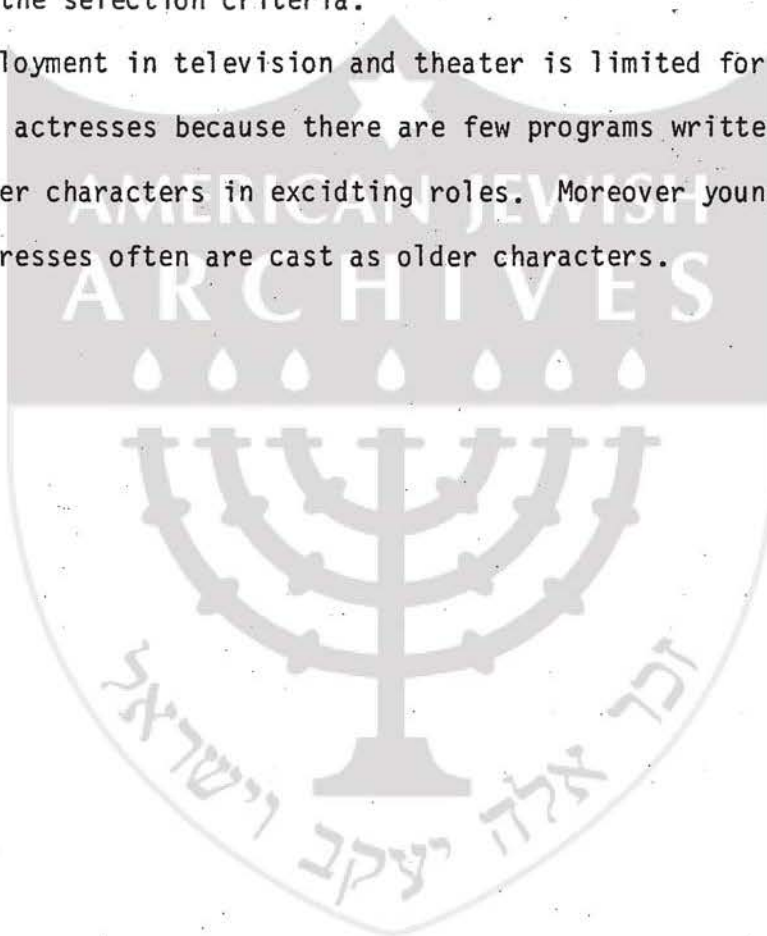
B. Research

- There is no scholarly outlet for publishing research on age stereotyping and the media.
- Lag time between gathering data and publication in a scholarly outlet minimizes the impact of scholarly analyses of portrayal.
- The majority of studies of portrayal of women and minorities do not include age as a variable.
- Studies of portrayal do not advance theory and consequently are unlikely to be published in scholarly outlets.
- Research on age stereotyping and the media is fragmentary.



C. Age Discrimination in Media Employment

- There is no age profile of influential reporters, anchorpersons, directors, producers and newspaper and broadcast media executives.
- Top management jobs in media traditionally have gone to white males. Minorities and women have had to fight to get jobs in the media.
- The media deny older persons jobs on air because appearance is one of the selection criteria.
- Employment in television and theater is limited for older actors and actresses because there are few programs written which include older characters in exciting roles. Moreover younger actors and actresses often are cast as older characters.



D. Technology

- In planning to utilize cable with a national population such as the older adult it is important to recognize that many aspects of the technology are not widely applicable to cable as it exists today and that not every opportunity will be available in all places.
- The older adult is one of the few groups not represented among cable subscribers.
- Some guidelines are needed for the cable franchising process and enforcement powers given to local governments need to be augmented.



III. KEY ISSUES

The Committee identified the following issues related to the key areas which were examined:

1. Media Portrayal of Older Persons

ISSUE: What should be the role of the mass media in interpreting the impact on society of the changes in the size of the older population and in disseminating information that would reduce the stigma against older persons?

ISSUE: To what extent is the media responsible for disseminating to the general public factual information about the physical, physiological, cognitive and functional changes which occur as a part of the normal aging process?

ISSUE: What should be television's role in fostering positive relationships between older persons and individuals in other age groups, given its capacity to perpetuate cultural values and role models?

ISSUE: What type of television programming must be provided to help establish self esteem and self-worth among older persons?

ISSUE: What steps must be taken by television to increase the utilization and enhance the portrayal of the minority aged, women, rural and poor older persons?

ISSUE: What are the effects on the viewers of underrepresentation and stereotyping of older persons including women, minorities, the rural and poor aged?

ISSUE: What must the television industry do to diversify the portrayal of older persons?

ISSUE: What rules might be developed by the Federal Communications Commission with regard to the portrayal of older persons that would not interfere with First Amendment rights?



2. Discrimination in Media Employment

ISSUE: What can be done to alert local media about the issues of ageism in employment?

ISSUE: What must the industry do to increase the number of older minorities and women who appear in television drama?

ISSUE: What kinds of jobs in the media should be available to older persons and can the unions be helpful in providing training?

ISSUE: What entry level jobs are available in media for older persons?

ISSUE: What can be done to encourage the media to use more older actors, actresses, writers and producers?

ISSUE: Should the media be encouraged to hire reporters to cover aging issues on a regular basis as is done with weather, sports and health.

ISSUE: Should the media be encouraged to hire older persons as consultants to provide technical assistance in planning for programs on aging?

ISSUE: What must the industry do to increase the number of older minorities and women who appear in television drama and commercials?

ISSUE: What can be done to prevent employers from circumventing the Age Discrimination in Employment Act by claiming that the older worker was not hired for other reasons, such as competition, better qualified applicants, etc?

3. New Media Technology and the Aging

ISSUE: Older Americans living on fixed incomes and the poor aged may not be able to afford the services available through the new media technology.

ISSUE: What legislation is needed to force cable companies to provide the services promised when negotiating for cable franchises?

ISSUE: Given the evolving technology, what is the danger of ghettoizing the older population?

ISSUE: What is being done about the cost ^{to} the public and ^{to} the older persons whose incomes are limited?

ISSUE: Does cable television signal the end to public broadcasting?

ISSUE: As cable begins to specialize by meeting the fundamental needs of older people will that success provide impetus for the major networks to change their programming?

ISSUE: Will the services provided by the new technology become a middle class phenomenon and what are the implications for indigent older persons existing on a survival level?

ISSUE: What options are open to the indigent older person in terms of the new communications technology?

ISSUE: How can the illiterate elderly become literate about the new technology so they can learn how to impact the system?

ISSUE: Of what value is the new technology if it does not facilitate social communication for older persons?

ISSUE: How do you get access to cables already in a given area?

ISSUE: What would be the impact on older persons of the transition to telecommunications technology that would allow them to acquire information and transact routine business without leaving their homes?

ISSUE: Older persons may view the new technology as a threat rather than an opportunity and trying to cope with it could heighten their frustration and their sense of isolation.



IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Media Portrayal of Older Persons

1. Current research on portrayal of older persons in media does not effectively distinguish between frequently and infrequently aired commercials, or between programs with a high audience share and those with a low audience share. Therefore the committee recommends (a) that some type of exposure measure or means of reflecting Gross Ratings Points and audience share, be used in validating conclusions about the stereotypic portrayal of older persons; (b) that a mechanism be established for monitoring commercials and indicating those that are insulting to older persons; (c) that a continuous effort be made to present the legitimate concerns of the older population to advertisers; (d) that marketing people be continuously educated about the importance of older Americans and the responsibility of the business community to serve them fairly and treat them with respect; and (e) that a concerted effort be made to sensitize media representatives to aging issues and ways to approach them on television.
2. Keeping in mind the First Amendment rights of broadcasters and advocating no infringement on such, the Committee recommends a Federal Communications Commission inquiry into the causes and possible remedies for the continued stereotyping of older persons in television, the causes of the lack of diversity in the portrayal of older persons--particularly minorities and women, and the effect of this lack of diversity on viewers of all ages.

B. Establishment of a National Council for Mass Media and Older Persons

Recognizing the need to (1) improve the quality of older persons' lives in their media environment, (2) enhance their sense of self worth and self esteem by working for programming and publications which raise the public consciousness and create awareness of aging issues, and deal with normal issues of aging in realistic, attractive and enlightening ways, the Committee recommends establishment of a National Council for Mass Media and Older Persons for a 10-year period to promote research on media portrayal and program activity; explore developments in media industries; promote access to emerging technologies and establish priorities for their use; and promote advocacy efforts in media of assistance to older Americans.

The Council also would undertake regular publication of a magazine that would serve as an outlet for researchers and would be circulated to advertisers, producers, broadcasters, journalists, writers, directors, program executives, marketing and academic researchers and aging advocates.

C. Research on Media and Aging

Sociological studies of the mass media usually focus on one of three related problems: on the processes by which mediated messages are generated; on message content itself; or on the diffusion of information through a population, and its impact on individuals, groups, or the society as a whole. (Johnstone, et al, 1976). Early academic literature on media and aging was grounded in stereotypic assumptions about the level of activity and abilities of older adults. For example, older people are sedentary, have fewer ties to the world, and more leisure time. (Meyersohn, 1961). Although such stereotypic assumptions rarely appear in the empirical studies of the 1980s, researchers still have not come to grips with the problems in identifying stereotypes. The criteria used by researchers to identify an older character do not yet reflect the complex, variable and relative nature of the aging process. (Jamieson, 1980). Therefore the Committee recommends that research be encouraged on the complex process by which mediated and nonmediated information creates our sense of what it is to age and our attitudes toward aging, and that studies of the mass media and women and/or minorities include "age" as a variable.

Recognizing that radio plays a significant role in the lives of institutionalized and other older persons; that the literature survey revealed little or no data on racial and ethnic minority older persons; and that certain media had not been subjected to empirical study, the Committee recommends that the Administration on Aging, the National Institute on Aging, and the Department of

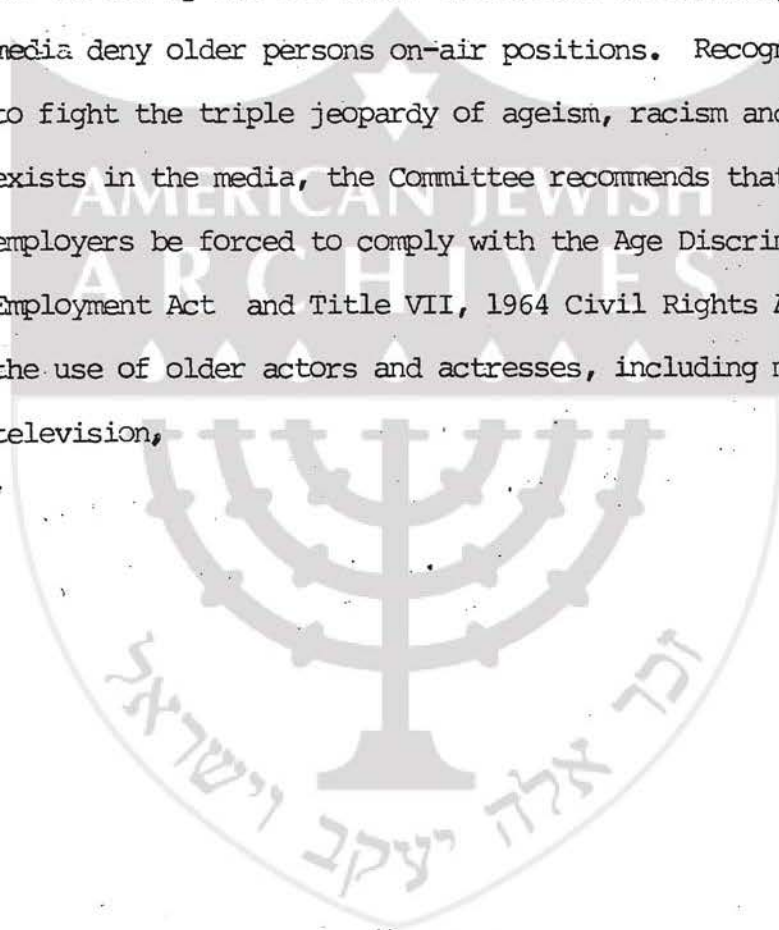
Education encourage research on portrayal of older Americans in:

- TV News
- Public broadcasting
- Documentaries
- Game shows
- Talk shows
- Most children's programming
- Radio
- Cable television
- Specialized journals
- Textbooks
- Films
- Newspapers



D. Discrimination in Media Employment

It is a well documented fact that minorities, women and older persons are faced with discriminatory practices in the media. The number of older persons depicted on television is disproportionately small, the employment of older actors and actresses is limited by the few older characters in exciting roles, and the media deny older persons on-air positions. Recognizing the need to fight the triple jeopardy of ageism, racism and sexism as it exists in the media, the Committee recommends that the media employers be forced to comply with the Age Discrimination in Employment Act and Title VII, 1964 Civil Rights Act to increase the use of older actors and actresses, including minorities, in television,



E. Utilization of New Media Technology

The explosion in the cable television field presents increased opportunities for programming directed toward the needs of older Americans in entertainment, news and information. The new technology also offers innovative services that can help solve problems faced by older Americans. The Committee makes the following recommendation: that those engaged in funding and administering programs for older persons—both government and private—consider telecommunications technology as a tool for providing services; that older persons and their advocates get involved in the franchising process by indicating the types of services that are important and seek commitments from individuals awarded cable franchises; and that a clearinghouse be established for information on telecommunications technology so that older persons can petition for access to new services at affordable rates.

Aging and The Human Spirit

A Reader in Religion and Gerontology

This collection of papers brings together in a single volume readings on aging from writers in religion and in the social sciences in order to make the best contributions on religion and aging available both to students of gerontology and to religious leaders. Informed by a humane and humanistic image of aging, this reader may help students of aging broaden and deepen their understanding of the religious contribution to the lives of the elderly. It will also help clergy and laity reflect critically on the contributions of religious institutions to the elderly. It is an ideal resource for individual study, university and seminary classes, and lay discussion groups.

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Robert J. Havighurst
Education and Human Development
University of Chicago

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Exploration Press, 5757 University Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60637
ISBN 0-913552-17-8
\$9.95 Paperback \$19.95 Hard Cover

Aging and the Human Spirit

LeFevre and LeFevre
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Aging and the Human Spirit



A Reader in Religion and Gerontology

Edited by

Carol LeFevre and Perry LeFevre

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JOSEPH GIORDANO

FAMILIES

MYTHS ABOUT IMMIGRANTS

Too many Americans seem to have forgotten that it was their grandparents, not the Cubans, Haitians, or Vietnamese refugees, who were the first "boat people."

Last year about 160,000 Cuban and Haitian "boat people," some one-fifth of the year's immigration total, entered this country. Many Americans feel uneasy when they hear this statistic. They also worry when they learn of the several million who have entered the U.S. illegally in recent years. Charges that "undocumented workers" contribute to the high unemployment rate bring the issue close to home.

These feelings are fairly widespread, expressed even by people who are themselves of immigrant stock. Many Italian Americans see the newcomers as somehow "different" from their forebears who came here from Southern Europe at the turn of the century. Yet the differences are not all that great: My own grandfather jumped ship when he arrived here from Genoa 90 years ago. Today he would be called an "illegal alien." If he hadn't been permitted to stay, my family wouldn't be here now.

ANTIIMMIGRANT SENTIMENT

Statistics confirm that antiimmigrant sentiment is growing in this country. In Roper polls conducted in September 1979 and August 1980, 9 out of 10 surveyed supported an "all-out effort to halt illegal immigration" and 8 out of 10 favored reducing the number of legal aliens.

Yet America has a tradition of welcoming newcomers. In recent years, the U.S. has been accepting twice as many refugees for permanent residence as the average Western country. Between 1970 and 1980, we absorbed 4.4 million new residents, both legal and illegal, the largest wave in any decade in American history.

Today's immigrants want the same things my grandparents wanted for themselves and their families: to join kinfolk already in this country, to escape



from poverty, to build a better life. In many ways, everyone benefits from the influx. Immigrants and refugees are survivors. The same drive and determination that impelled them to take chances and uproot their families continues to motivate them in their new lives in this country. In general, they have a strong desire to be successful, or at least to recapture what they had in the old country.

Of course, America's acceptance of immigrants has not always been wholehearted. Many people do not realize that the same things that are being said about Cubans, Haitians, Vietnamese, and other recent immigrants were once said about Italians. In 1895 John Knight wrote in the *Charities Review*:

"It is necessary to multiply the illustrations which might be given of the conditions of life of many of our recent immigrants, and of the burdens, financial and otherwise, which they bring upon our communities. If further illustrations are sought they may be found among the foreign-born miners of Pennsylvania, some of whom, we have been told, live in rickety, miserable shanties unfit for a well-bred dog to live in, and among the people who were discovered

in New York contentedly living in the midst of the filth that dripped from the garbage dumps. The Italians, we learn from [another source], 'herd together persistently, and as they are increasing rapidly, they form objectionable permanent slums. . . . The conditions are aggravated by an excess of unskilled laborers—single men who are idle a large part of the time.' The result thus far has been a high rate of infant mortality, an excess of serious crime among the men, and an increase of drunkenness and sexual depravity. In other words, the Italians show the beginnings of a degenerate class. . . . They are a simple peasant class who respond readily to their environment; if allowed to continue in unwholesome conditions we may be sure that the next generation will bring forth a crop of dependents, delinquents, and defectives to fill up our public institutions."

THE MYTHS AND THE FACTS

Sound familiar? Similar attitudes were expressed about the Irish, Jews, Poles, and other immigrant groups.

What are the myths—and the facts—about today's newcomers?

1. "Refugees and immigrants take more than they give."

The widely held belief that immigrants take "more than their share" of governmental benefits is a myth. (Whether they, or any other group, should be judged according to their need for benefits is another matter entirely.)

In a study based on a 1976 Census Bureau survey, Dr. Julian Simon of the University of Illinois analyzed 150,000 families, one-tenth of them immigrant. Comparing taxes paid and services received by both the native-born and immigrant families, he discovered some interesting facts. During their first 12 years in this country, the immigrant families made substantially less use of services such as welfare, unemployment compensation, food stamps, Medicare-Medicaid, schooling, and social security than did the native-born, while paying equivalent amounts in taxes.

2. "It is better to disperse immigrants

throughout the country than to have them cluster in their own communities."

Many people believe that dispersing immigrants will help them blend more rapidly into American society. While dispersal would avoid the flooding of certain job markets by immigrants and thereby help to reduce community tensions, it might also hamper the newcomers' adjustment. Last year, Irving M. Levine of the American Jewish Committee, when testifying before the Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy, said "experts have completely revised their views of the immigrant experience. They now see neighborhoods of newcomers not as barriers to entrance into the American mainstream, but as aids in the process of acculturation. Migrants learned about their adopted country in communities in which they felt culturally comfortable at the same time as they gradually became familiar with American modes of thought and behavior."

Though we may all agree that adjustment to the new society is the ultimate goal, we should not assume that there's only one way to achieve it. If new immigrants have friends or family already established in a community of assimilated cultures, it might be best for them to

settle there. If not, a community of people with similar backgrounds and common problems, all of whom speak the same language, may prove to be a greater aid to acculturation.

3. "Immigrants compete for the same jobs as native-born Americans—and often get them."

This controversy has raged since the earliest waves of immigration; many of our parents and grandparents were also accused of taking jobs away from those already living in this country. Employers often get away with paying immigrants lower wages than native-born workers because those who have recently arrived are particularly desperate for any kind of work. Immigrants have been used to cross the picket lines of striking workers. But we make a mistake when we blame the newcomers for this state of affairs. More pressure should be brought to bear on the employers who use such unscrupulous tactics, and on government policies that encourage such practices. The very fact that there are job shortages is a signal not that there are too many people living in this country, but that economic priorities are often misplaced.

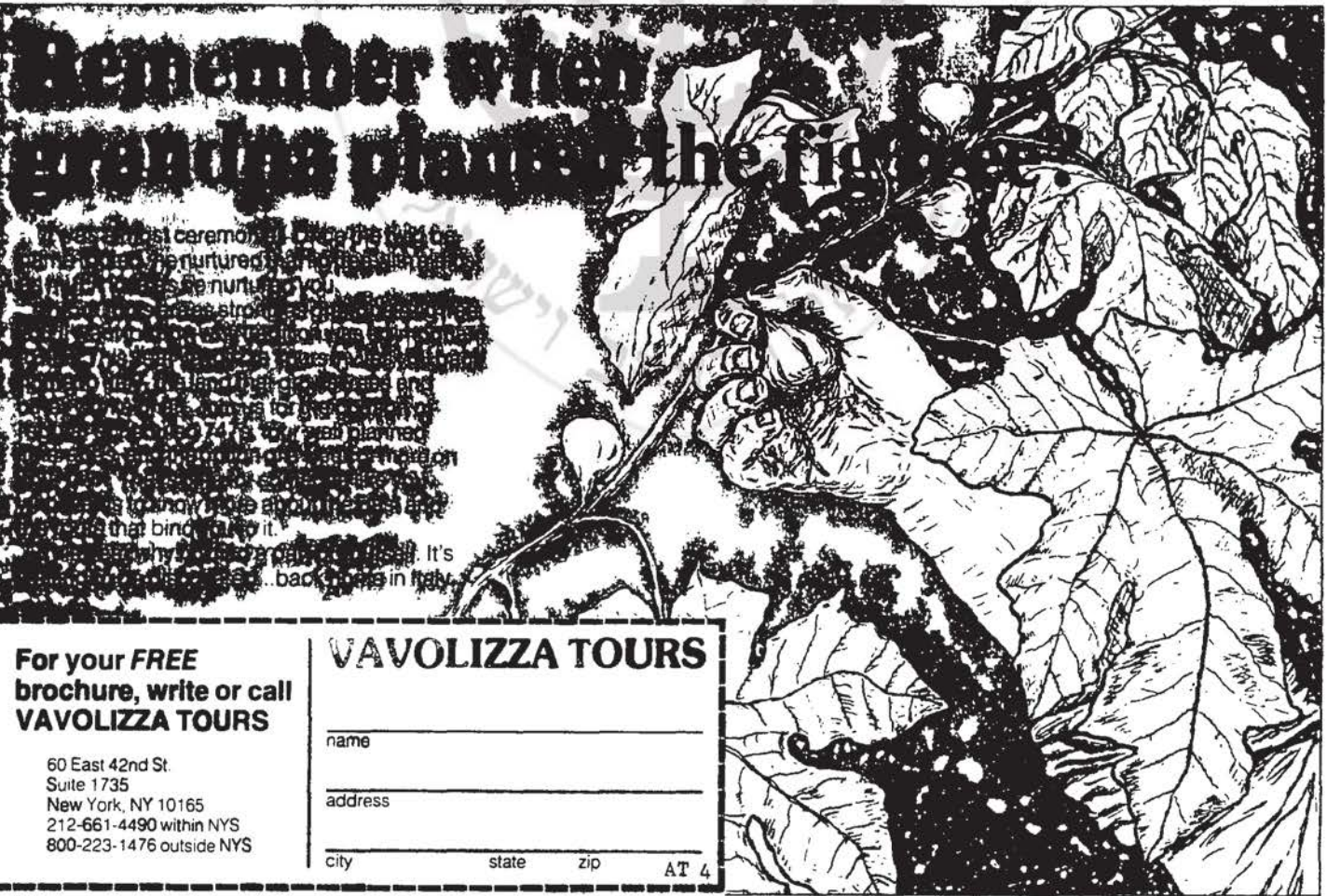
4. "Today's immigrants can't be compared to our parents or grandparents

because there are more services available to immigrants these days."

While many immigrants now arrive by plane at Kennedy airport rather than by boat at Ellis Island, and in many ways are better prepared than their predecessors, adjustment problems are often the same as they were generations ago: language difficulties, guilt over leaving the homeland and the family, hostility from natives, isolation, unfamiliar laws and customs. All this can result in stress and, in some cases, serious mental problems. A report by the National Institute on Mental Health indicates significantly higher rates of depression among immigrants than among the general population.

Rosemary Stigliano, former director of the Ferrini Welfare League in New York City, says that the children of newly arrived Italian immigrants encounter tremendous difficulty in school, because of both poor adjustment and the insensitivity of teachers and social workers.

Nick, 15, recently arrived from Bari with his family. His father worked at two jobs while his mother stayed home to care for four children. Because of his poor English, Nick was placed in a class with much younger children. He felt out of place, and even had trouble fitting his



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legs under the small desk. Not wanting to hurt his parents, he didn't tell them about his unhappiness in school. He simply stopped attending, and took a job in a restaurant instead. He worked nine to five, telling his parents that he was staying after school each day to play basketball. But his mother learned from a friend that the school didn't have a basketball court. When she confronted him, he begged her not to tell his father. But his father finally learned the truth from a school counselor who visited their home, and all hell broke loose. Nick tried to explain how humiliating his school experience had been, but his father would not be appeased. The father screamed at Nick and struck him, and neighbors, disturbed by the noise, called for help. When the police arrived, the father turned his anger toward the two officers, shouting, "Are you telling me I can't hit my kid? Are you crazy?"

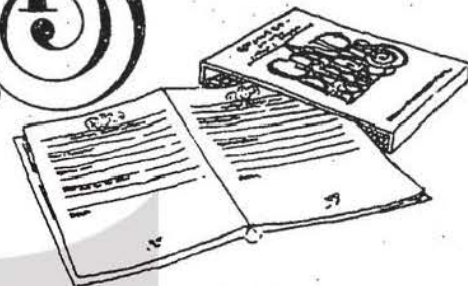
Fortunately, the policemen were sympathetic, and didn't want to make trouble for the family. With the aid of the school counselor, they were able to calm the father. Today, Nick is back in school, in a more appropriate class, and is getting extra help with his English.

But the incident could easily have turned into something much worse, and could have added grist to the mill of myths about immigrants. These myths must be confronted in order to maintain the American tradition of welcoming newcomers and helping them to prosper in their adopted environment. The spirit of a helping hand is best expressed in the story of one Chicago shoemaker.

Joe Tolitano came from Italy in 1929 with a skill and a dream. In 1937 he opened his own shoe-repair shop and today his establishment is a neighborhood landmark. In the past two decades, he has added new shops to his growing business. He already has 20 people working for him, and in the next few months he's going to hire about 25 more. But instead of simply advertising for shoemakers with experience, he's trying to do what someone did for him over 50 years ago. He wants to hire immigrants—Cubans, Haitians, Mexicans, and others. He's spreading the word through the news media and immigrant agencies.

"This is a nation of immigrants and the new immigrants are the ones who are going to have it the hardest," says Joe. "I raised a family, and the government has been good to me, so I don't see why it can't be so for the next person. I came from Italy fifty years ago, so I know the problems they're facing."

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1-30-81

Rabbi Tanenbaum -
Here's the beginning
of the larger report.
along with the draft
of the Exec Summary from
Garrison. M. Johnson

DRAFT

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON CREATING AN AGE-INTEGRATED SOCIETY--IMPLICATIONS FOR
THE MEDIA

I. INTRODUCTION

Older Americans have a bad image. It's an image they do not deserve, but one which results from the youth cultism in this country and the dissemination by the mass media of negative perceptions of growing old.

Congress apparently recognizes the socializing function of the mass media and its power to influence opinions, values and attitudes of society at large and individual citizens in particular. In the enabling legislation for the 1981 White House Conference on Aging, Congress mandated that a policy be developed to overcome false stereotypes about older persons.

Toward that end a technical committee was established to explore personal and societal implications for the media in an intergenerational context. Media and aging was one of seven issue areas examined under the rubric "Creating an Age-Integrated Society," a phrase which lends itself to both short and long term perspectives.

In preparation for the 1981 White House Conference on Aging, the Technical Committee on Media addressed four major themes:

- . the influence of the media in forming and perpetuating cultural values and role models and in changing society's values by fostering constructive relationships between older persons and other age groups.
- . the role of older people as consumers of the content of the media.
- . the role of older people as participants in producing the education, information and entertainment content in the media, and
- . the impact of new media technologies on the lives of older people.

The Committee also focused on several side issues which emerged during discussions of the key areas, namely (1) the forces which act on the media to control it; (2) age discrimination in employment as practiced by the media; and (3) how the media treats racial and ethnic minorities, women, and rural and poor older persons.

The Committee convened four all-day meetings between July, 1980 and January 1981 to identify pertinent issues; gather appropriate academic background materials on older people and the media; consult with media executives and experts in new media technologies and summarize insights, findings and policy recommendations for inclusion in its report to Conference delegates. Two subcommittees were formed and charged with the responsibility of preparing background information as a jumping off point for the Committee's deliberations. The Subcommittee on Stereotypes conducted a review of the literature in the field to determine what, if any research had been done on portrayal of older persons in the media. The committee was presented with a document entitled "Stereotyping of the Elderly in the Mass Media: A Review of the Literature," as prepared by Kathleen Jamieson, and another entitled "Age Stereotyping and the Media," prepared by Lydia Bragger.

The Subcommittee on New Media Technology prepared a brief background paper entitled "Cable Television Programs for Older Adults." (Marron, 1980) The committee called in experts on new media technology to present up to date information on the communications industry.

Media executives representing television, print, advertising, marketing and research were invited to a similar one day meeting which was designed to sensitize them to the issues of aging and discuss what the media could do to help change society's negative attitudes toward aging.

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A. When Does One Become Old?

Fundamental to all stereotypes of elders is the assumption that at some definable point persons become "old." But nobody seems sure when that point is reached--at 45, 55, 60, 62 or 65 years of age. Policymakers are far from reaching a consensus on this issue. The U.S. Department of Labor considers workers who are over 45 as "older." Some federal programs define "older" persons as those age 62, others as persons age 65. In Puritan times a person was considered to be old at age 60. Each of these definitions of old is based on the chronological age, that is the number of years a person has lived since birth, or calendar years.

Our chronological age may differ from the age we perceive ourselves to be. Bernard Baruch observed, "Old age is always 15 years older than I am." This is a commonly held perception. Most persons between the ages of 65 and 70 reject the label "old" and instead label themselves "middle aged." Moreover, in the 70+ group between 25 and 50 percent consider themselves middle aged. (Jamieson, 1980).

Aging is a complex and individual process. According to Rogers (1979, p. 11) we can have several different ages simultaneously--biological, chronological, social and psychological. Not all humans age in exactly the same way. Thus the questions (1) How old are you? (2) How old do you look? (3) How old do you feel? and (4) How old do you act? are apt to yield different answers. One's biological age and chronological age may differ because the occurrence of physical changes generally associated with aging varies. "Some are younger at 70 than others at 17," George Bernard Shaw observed in commenting on this phenomenon. Yet inherent in Shaw's observation is the assumption that being "young" is more positive than being "old." (Jamieson, 1980).

The concept "being old" covers many familiar stereotypes and serves as shorthand for the gamut of misconceptions to which older persons are

vulnerable: unsteady state of mind; poor health; limited capacity for work; fading interest in life; impoverished economic condition and so on. Jamieson (1980) believes that all these assumptions may be challenged as unfair to the real facts about older persons and presents evidence which may refute many of the commonly held stereotypes about older persons and aging.

- The ability of older persons to absorb information has been questioned by studies which asked that they absorb quickly paced verbal stimuli. However, when the older adult can control the pace at which information is presented, the gap between older and younger persons practically disappears. Moreover, when the information being processed relates to their experience the older persons will process it as quickly as will younger persons. "Reaction times do slow with age, but most of the aged fully retain until they are very old, and often until their death, their ability to reason, their memory, their wit." (National Institute on Aging, 1977).
- Persons over 60 typically earn lower scores on public affairs and general tests of scientific knowledge than younger persons, but the difference in scores is largely attributable to educational level, not age. The educational level of persons over 65 is lower than that of the population at large with only 10 percent of persons in that age category at the turn of the century having a high school education. Seventy percent of those approaching 65 in the year 2000 will have completed high school.
- Another factor contributing to the misconception that mental functions dull with age is the fact that until recently older persons were tested by instruments designed to measure the abilities of the young. Age-biased IQ tests, for example, defined and measured abilities important during youth, thus suggested that older persons were deficient. Recent findings have exposed these biases.

For instance, longitudinal studies conducted at Duke University concluded that intelligence does not decline between the ages of 60 and 69. The only exception was found in persons with very high blood pressure. One 12-year study of persons who averaged 81 years of age found cases of increased intellectual ability (Kaluger and Kaluger, 1974). Furthermore, the notion that the relation between age and intelligence is inverse was abandoned by the American Psychological Association in 1973.

Between 5 and 15 percent of older persons suffer from brain lesions which if present in large quantities can produce memory loss. Only the more severe form of this disease, known as senile dementia of the alzheimer's type (SDAT) produces loss of control over bodily functions, mental deterioration, and finally death. Senility is not necessarily a consequence of aging. What often is defined as senility may on closer examination be identified as the reaction to a drug or combination of drugs; anemia; and malnutrition or a treatable physical impediment or disease. If we assume that aging brings mental decline, difficulties in communicating will mistakenly be assumed to indicate inevitable senility and remain uncorrected. One's ability to communicate may be affected by illness or medication at any age. For example:

- Blood pressure often rises with age and some drugs used to reduce high blood pressure produce dizziness.
- A stroke may impair speech functions.
- An acute illness such as pneumonia may produce no symptoms in an older person other than confusion.
- As hearing declines a loss in channel capacity may slow the rate at which oral communication can be decoded.

A study by Niedringhaus (1978) concludes that "older persons may be termed confused, when they actually don't hear the things we are telling them." As our knowledge of the process of aging increases, Jamieson (1980) observed, the use of such diagnostic phrases as "senile dementia"--the madness of age--will continue to decrease.

Older persons have built up immunity to many illnesses which threaten younger persons. Chronic illness does increase with age, but the incidence of acute conditions actually decreases with age. Those over age 65 experience approximately twice the number of "bed disability days" as the population at large. Compared to younger age groups, persons over 65 experience greater amounts of visual and hearing impairment and severe increases in heart conditions; some muscle loss occurs; bones become more brittle; and the likelihood of arthritis increases. Overall the picture is not bleak. Only 9.1 percent of those over 65 report that their health is poor, while 22.4 percent label it fair, 38.9 percent, good and 29.1 percent, excellent.

Conventional expressions such as "young ideas" and "young blood" often used by business firms and "twilight years" to describe the stage of life of older persons, assume a stereotype challenged by research. A study conducted by McFarland (1973) during World War II when it was necessary to employ retired workers in the aircraft plants of Southern California found that older workers "had greater stability on the job, fewer accidents, and less time lost from work than did younger employees." Since McFarland's pioneering work, studies by the Department of Labor, the National Council on Aging and others, have found that older workers are able to produce work which is qualitatively and quantitatively equal or superior to that of younger workers. The Department of Labor found greater differences in work productivity within age groups than between age groups. Nevertheless, only 35 percent of respondents in a National Council on Aging-Harris Survey believe older persons are "very good at getting things done."

The myth that most older persons are lonely and unloved, divorced from family and bereft of human contact is tenacious and is

sustained by another myth--the notion that most older persons are in institutions. According to Shanas (1978) most old people in the United States live close to at least one of their children and see at least one child, their siblings and relatives often. Moreover, older persons who are either bedfast or housebound because of ill health, are twice as likely to be living at home as to be resident in an institution. Shanas (1978) observes that institutionalizing an older relative generally is viewed as the option of last resort, one which is entertained reluctantly and only after undergoing "severe personal, social and economic stress." Furthermore, evidence disputes the notion that children heartlessly "dump" their aging parents into nursing homes.

According to New Perspectives in Health Care for Older Americans (1976) the percent of older persons in institutions remained constant between 1962 and 1975. But the myth dies hard. One study found that "75 percent of a sample of nursing students thought older persons resided in nursing homes while 35 percent of a group of young psychologists thought the same." In fact, only about 5 percent of the older population is institutionalized.

A major study of personality characteristics (Mass and Kuypers, 1974) conducted over a 40-year period found no evidence to support the popular belief that "aging ushers in a massive decline in psychological functioning or a narrowing down of ways to live." Despite this evidence, only 19 percent of a national sample viewed older persons as "very open minded and adaptable." Jamieson points out that the generation we stereotype as "set in its ways" has successfully adapted to technological changes which were unthought of a century ago.

Jamieson (1980) points out that while some older persons do disengage from society, many remain active. For example, some 15,184 older persons serve as Foster Grandparents and 233,878 participate as Retired Senior Volunteers. Moreover, older persons play an active role in government. In 1976, while only 59.2 percent of the voting age population cast ballots, some 62.2 percent of those over 65 reported voting. Older persons also register in greater percentages than does the electorate as a whole. Today, many older people continue to be socially, physically, mentally and sexually active. But "no matter how vigorous and robust individuals may feel, if they live in a society that attaches strongly negative stereotypes to aging they will have difficulty escaping a deteriorating self-image as they age." (Rogers, 1979, p. 13).

B. MEDIA AND AGING

"Negative attitudes toward old age and the old, which probably have existed in most societies, became exacerbated in our own society during the transformation from a frontier to an urban, technological economy which placed its highest value on productive efficiency and fostered obsolescence of both machines and men," according to Tibbits (The Gerontologist, 1979). Factors contributing to "ageism" include the phenomenal rise in the number of older Americans coupled with generalizations based on superficial observation of the prevalence of biological, behavioral and social decrements among them. (Tibbits, 1979). In 1776, the year this country declared its independence, two percent of the American population was 65 years of age and older. Today, 11 percent, or one in nine Americans is over 65, and by the year 2030 individuals over 65 will make up 18 percent of the U.S. population.

Because of this phenomenal growth in the size of the older population, Kubey (1980) predicts that aging and "ageism" will become increasingly important social issues in the next decade. Moreover, he points out that aging could have a broader impact than previous social movements because all people are inevitably subject to growing old.

The mass media plays a preeminent role in this society and some aging advocates blame the media for the widespread prejudice against older persons and for the public's negative views about aging. "The media has portrayed old people as ugly, decrepit, stupid, forgetful, toothless, sexless and ready to fall off the conveyor belt of life after 65." (Bragger, 1980). It is almost impossible to avoid print or broadcast media on a daily basis and many of the stereotypes of older persons are found in the television programs we watch and the books and magazines we read. Bragger (1980) states that while all forms of mass media are guilty of stereotyping of the old, television probably is the most persuasive medium because while it reflects the injustices of society it reinforces and perpetuates them at the same time. "Television legitimizes ideas." The result is that older persons, as well as those in other age groups get daily messages that there is something inherently wrong with being old. In this country, 98 percent of all homes have television sets and Americans--especially the very young, the old and the poor--tune in to about six hours a day or about 2,200 hours a year.

"Television is not merely entertainment, it shapes our perceptions of reality and defines for us who and what is good and bad." (Marks, 1979. Consequently, those in charge of the media bear a tremendous social responsibility. The mass media, especially television, has the potential to alter the negative stereotypes of older persons by providing information about the aging process and various role models demonstrating successful ways of dealing with growing older.

"We would like to see television explore on a regular basis the satisfaction of life after 60, showing life, intelligence, fruitful work, love and sex. (Bragger, 1980).

"We need some realistic alternative visions of older people and their style of life. Something between the cantankerous, constipated, sickly, sterile, stupid, forgetful image and the all too-perfect, ever-helpful, all-knowing, gracious and kindly image." (Marks, 1979)

Older persons are the primary consumers of television. A national survey found that the typical older adult consumes approximately 4 to 7 more hours of television each week than does the average viewer. (Marron, 1980).

A number of studies have examined the uses of television by older adults and conditions which may predispose them to television. Meyersohn (1961) suggests that television viewing is apt to become the main leisure time activity of older persons as they grow more sedentary, have more leisure time and have fewer ties with the world. It has been hypothesized that old people who live isolated lives may be particularly vulnerable to television's influence in areas about which their social roles leave them less informed or because they are less capable of testing the validity of what they have seen in informal conversation (Comstock et al., 1978; Hess, 1974).

Some researchers speculate that television is the preferred mass communication medium of older persons because it provides both audio and visual stimuli which may be important for persons experiencing some decrement in their capacity to see and hear. (Marron, 1980) Others indicate that television at times may substitute for the companionship of peers and distant family members. (Hess, 1974; Davis, 1971; Shramm, 1969).

Kubey (1980) notes that while it is popular to criticize television because "its presence and impact are so pervasive" ... television can be praised for its effective conveyance of information and its unique suitability to the aged's life style."

Recognizing television's central role in the lives of older adults many researchers advocate the use of television, specifically cable television, to disseminate essential information, facilitate the delivery of social services, and reduce isolation among older persons. Cable is particularly suited to this task since it is community oriented and permits programming which addresses a specific message to a specified audience, such as older persons. The nation is in the midst of an explosion of new media technology that could have a positive impact on the lives of older adults.



V. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. that the Administration on Aging, the National Institute on Aging and the Department of Education encourage research on portrayal of older Americans in:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| . TV News | . radio |
| . Public broadcasting | . cable television |
| . documentaries | . specialized journals |
| . game shows | . textbooks |
| . talk shows | . films |
| . most children's programming | . newspapers |

2. ~~that~~ a concerted effort be made to sensitize media representatives to aging issues and ways to approach them on television.
3. that media representatives be encouraged to increase the representation of older persons, particularly older women and the minority aged.
4. that the criteria used by researchers to identify an older person reflect the complex, variable and relative nature of the aging process. More sophisticated measures would (a) decrease reliance on physical indicators, which often are misleading, and increase reliance on contextual indicators, and (b) increase the use of multiple indicators and decrease reliance on any single indicator.
5. that some type of exposure measure or a way to reflect Gross Ratings Points and audience share be used in validating conclusions about stereotypic portrayal of the elderly. Current research on portrayal does not effectively distinguish between frequently and infrequently aired commercials, for example, or between programs with a high audience share and those with a low audience share.

6. that studies of the mass media and women and/or minorities include "age" as a variable.
7. that research be encouraged on the complex process by which mediated and nonmediated information creates our sense of what it is to age and our attitudes toward aging.
8. that a mechanism be established for monitoring commercials and indicating those that are insulting to older persons.
9. that a continuous effort be made to present the legitimate concerns of the older population to advertisers.
10. that marketing people be continuously educated about the importance of older Americans and the responsibility of the business community to serve them fairly and treat them with respect.
11. that media employers be forced to comply with the Age Discrimination in Employment Act to increase the use of older actors and actresses in the media.
12. that a National Council for Mass Media and Older Persons be established to promote research on media portrayal, program activity, advocacy efforts in media of assistance to older Americans.
13. that a media publication be established that would serve as an outlet for researchers.
14. that the Committee encourage those engaged in funding and administering programs for older persons--both government and private to consider telecommunications technology as a tool for providing services.

M. L. Johnson

NEW YORK STATE OFFICE FOR THE AGING GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON AGING WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON AGING

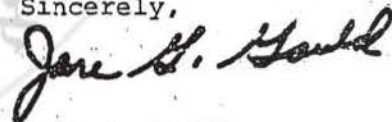
April 24, 1981

Dear Participant:

Please find enclosed a Summary of the Community Forums held in New York State from May through November 1980. This Summary reflects the concerns and recommendations that over 10,000 older citizens wished to be considered by the White House Conference on Aging. Those Community Forum Reports received by the New York State Office for the Aging prior to December 1980 were included in the deliberations of the Technical Assistance Committee which prepared the discussion papers previously mailed to you. The enclosed document is being distributed to all participants of the Governor's Conference on Aging.

The Summary should enhance an awareness of the scope and intensity of problems faced by older people throughout New York State, as well as ensure that the concerns raised at the local level are given due consideration by the Governor's Conference on Aging.

Sincerely,



Jane G. Gould



SUMMARY

NEW YORK STATE
WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON AGING
COMMUNITY FORUMS



INTRODUCTION

In April 1980 New York State initiated its preparations for the 1981 White House Conference on Aging by encouraging the collaboration of older people with other members of their communities through local Community Forums. The focus of the Forums was an open discussion of the critical needs and concerns of the elderly. The subsequent Community Forum reports reflected the major problems and recommendations made by over 10,000 older people who, from May through November 1980, attended approximately 400 Forums throughout New York State.

The following pages are a summary of those Community Forums Results which were transmitted to the New York State Office for the Aging. In order to most accurately display the spirit as well as the contents of the Community Forums, little editing has been done and in many cases the recommendations made by the participants are presented verbatim.

In December 1980, an initial summary of the Forums was given to the State Office's Technical Assistance Committee which incorporated the reports into its development of a set of discussion papers for the May 10-12, 1981 Governor's Conference on Aging. The present document includes more recently received Community Forum Reports. It has been compiled for use by the participants at the Governor's Conference in the hope that it will increase an awareness of the variety and intensity of concerns held by older people throughout New York State and to ensure that those problems discussed at the local level are given due consideration by the Governor's Conference on Aging.

OLDER AMERICANS AS A GROWING NATIONAL RESOURCE

STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS/ CONCERNS

RECOMMENDATIONS

PERVASIVENESS (ACTION LEVEL) *

Q: How can our economic institutions, such as labor market, be altered so as to provide the flexibility necessary to make full use of older people's energies?

- | | | |
|---|--|----------------------------------|
| A. The talents and skills of the elderly are wasted during retirement | Older people could be utilized as teachers in a wide variety of programs | Mentioned by many groups |
| B. Older people should not be penalized for working past 65 years of age | | Mentioned by more than one group |
| C. The value of senior citizen input and participation in the labor market is not widely recognized | Promotional advertising on the radio and on T.V. should stress the value of hiring the older worker. This would bring the benefits of hiring seniors to the public's attention | Mentioned by more than one group |
| D. Certain skills of the elderly become obsolete as a result of advanced technologies | The labor market should provide some mechanism to retrain older people | Mentioned by more than one group |

Q: How can society expand opportunities for volunteer activity?

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| A. Many needed services could be provided by the older volunteer | Senior citizens should be used to provide services like the recording of historical data, recruitment and training of older volunteers | Mentioned by most groups
(F/S/L) |
| B. The availability of transportation greatly affects the volunteer opportunities of older people | Adequate transportation will be necessary to fully utilize the "freely given" talents of older people | Mentioned by many groups
(F/S/L) |
| C. Volunteering often places an unreasonable financial burden upon the older volunteer | Out-of-pocket expenses for the senior volunteer should be reduced or eliminated | Mentioned by more than one group |
| D. There is a general lack of knowledge about voluntary opportunities for older people | More publicity is needed regarding voluntary opportunities for older people. Information about voluntary opportunities could be disseminated through pre-retirement seminars and by utilizing newsletters and flyers | Mentioned by more than one group
(L) |
| E. Many Agencies are not in need of or have not implemented volunteer programs | More volunteer programs should exist in government and private sector organizations. Volunteers would be offered part-time employment whenever possible | Mentioned by more than one group |

*F - Federal, S - State, L - Local

OLDER AMERICANS AS A GROWING NATIONAL RESOURCE

STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS/ CONCERNS

RECOMMENDATIONS

PERVASIVENESS (ACTION LEVEL)

Q: How can our educational institutions be restructured to adequately accommodate the needs of older students?

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| A. There is a lack of community based educational opportunities for older people | There should be an increased local emphasis on educational opportunities for older people | Mentioned by many groups |
| B. Many older persons cannot afford to go to school | 1. Medicare could be a possible source of funding for the education of older people

2. Education costs of older people should be tax-deductible | Mentioned by many groups |
| C. Older people who wish to go to school often do not have the transportation resources to get them there | In considering educational opportunities for senior citizens, transportation needs should also be assessed | Mentioned by many groups |
| D. Many senior citizens feel out of place studying with younger people | Classes should be offered in smaller groups to facilitate positive inter-action between the young and old | Mentioned by more than one group
(F/S/L) |
| E. Home bound elderly do not have access to educational opportunities | Methods should be developed to extend educational programs to the home bound elderly | Mentioned by one group |

Q: How can we increase the effective participation of older people in government decision-making?

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| A. | Create a United States Department of Aging which reports directly to the President on matters of concern to older Americans | Mentioned by one group
(F) |
| B. Older people should be involved in decision making at all levels of government | | Mentioned by more than one group
(F/S/L) |
| C. Senior citizens should be made aware of all public meetings, forums and other related events | | Mentioned by more than one group |

Q: How can our society expand the role of older people in providing advocacy assistance to other older adults?

- | | | |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| A. Self advocacy should be done through senior organizations and active citizenship | Each senior citizen group should help the other to spread information, increase awareness, publish newsletters and issue papers | Mentioned by one group
(F/S/L) |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|

CREATING AN AGE INTEGRATED SOCIETY

Under the topic of Creating an Age Integrated Society, it was expressed that there is a need for better coordination of services. It was recommended that an integrated system of service delivery be developed with the needs of the client in mind. Many senior citizens referred to the "Social Stigma" attached to some types of services. They indicated that the existence of such stigmas contributed to the decrease of service usage by the elderly. The mass media is also perceived as presenting a negative view of growing old.

Many elderly commented that governmental responsiveness to the aged has been notoriously deficient due to lack of political accountability to this group. To combat the problem it was recommended that a national organization be created for the purpose of advocacy at all three levels of government.

Another issue raised by the Community forums was the presence of a large gap between young and old people. It was suggested that youth be educated about the issues and process of aging in our society.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS/ CONCERNS	RECOMMENDATIONS	PERVASIVENESS (ACTION LEVEL)
<u>Q: How can our various social and economic institutions work together in planning for an aging society?</u>		
A. There is a large gap between young and old people	1. Institute programs like "telephone pals" 2. Educate youth with regard to the problems associated with aging in our society	Mentioned by more than one group
B. There is a need for better coordination of services	Develop an integrated system of service delivery with the client in mind	Mentioned by more than one group
C. There is a "social stigma" attached to some services which precludes usage by many of the elderly		Mentioned by many groups
D. The mass media presents a negative view of growing old	The media should be encouraged to develop programs which eliminate stereo-types and show older people as a vigorous, talented and cooperative contributing segment of society	Mentioned by more than one group
E. Often senior citizens are not actively involved in solving their own problems	Encourage self help and advocacy through the formation of coalitions of senior groups which would lobby and participate in political and legislative affairs	Mentioned by one group
<u>Q: How can we ensure that the plans developed for the future are truly responsive to the needs and concerns of older people?</u>		
A. Governmental responsiveness to the aged has been notoriously deficient due to lack of political accountability to these groups	A national organization should be created to promote positive social changes for the elderly at all levels of government	Mentioned by more than one group

ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS

In discussions related to Environmental Systems, home ownership was cited as an area which presents considerable financial hardship to older people. School and property taxes, fuel, home maintenance and major repair costs are prime factors contributing to the loss of the homes of the elderly. To deal with the financial burdens of home ownership, many groups recommended that taxes be further reduced or totally eliminated for older people on fixed incomes. Several groups suggested that home maintenance programs be instituted for the elderly; guide lines for many programs should be made flexible; home nutrition services should be expanded; annual free safety inspections should be conducted on senior homes and legislation should be passed which would allow seniors to draw against equity in their homes for both maintenance and income purposes.

Congregate housing was mentioned as a possible alternative to costly home ownership. However, many groups mentioned that there is an overwhelming desire on the part of the elderly to remain in their own home no matter what it costs in dollars, comfort, isolation or convenience. It was recommended that the elderly be educated about the value of moving from one's home to less expensive, more convenient rental housing.

The planning of senior citizen housing that is both age and income integrated should be encouraged.

Elderly already living in housing projects spoke of their concern for adequate fire protection. Many builders have not installed fire alarms and easy access to fire escapes frequently does not exist. Other seniors mentioned that they do not know the proper procedures to take when repairs are needed.

With regard to transportation, older people related their difficulties in getting to medical facilities, friend's homes and grocery stores. Transportation resources were generally seen as inadequate in rural areas. However, in urban areas transportation was viewed as expensive and often unsafe. Recommendations for coping with the transportation problems of the elderly included mass-transit fare reductions, an increase in dial-a-ride type services (particularly in rural areas), and a planned expansion of transportation services that seriously considers the needs of the elderly.

Transportation was also seen as a crucial variable in the maintenance of the social, physical and mental health of the elderly.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS/ CONCERNS

RECOMMENDATION

PERVASIVENESS (ACTION LEVEL)

Q: How can rental housing programs be improved to better meet the needs of older people?

A. There is a lack of safe and conveniently located low income housing for the elderly.	1. Increase the number of subsidized housing units. 2. Increase rehabilitation funds for the conversion of large homes into apartments.	Mentioned by almost every group.
B. Most apartment buildings are not wheelchair accessible.	Lower buttons on elevators, provide handrails, raise toilets and install light-weight doors in apartment buildings.	Mentioned by many groups.
C. Rent controls affecting the elderly are not adequately enforced.	Enforce rent control regulations.	Mentioned by more than one group. (F/S/L)
D. There is an inconsistency as to who gets into public housing.	Public housing programs should be more closely monitored.	Mentioned by more than one group.
E. Housing arrangements for the elderly are either too isolated or not private enough.	Housing should be created for the elderly with private sleeping areas.	Mentioned by more than one group.

ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS

STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS/ CONCERNS

RECOMMENDATIONS

PERVASIVENESS (ACTION LEVEL)

F. There is an overwhelming desire on the part of the elderly to remain in their own homes no matter what it costs in dollars, comfort, isolation or convenience.

Community support and education through promotional advertising should be used to convey the idea that it is all right to move from one's home to less expensive, more convenient rental housing.

Mentioned by more than one group.

G. Rent is seen as money down the drain. The money is gone and there is nothing to show for it.

Townhouses are preferred over high rise apartments. The townhouse concept is more home like and represents less of a loss of familiar surroundings for the elderly.

Mentioned by one group.

H. No heterogeneity exists within senior citizen communities. This has a negative impact upon seniors.

Planning of senior citizen housing should be encouraged to produce an integrated community composed of multi-age and income levels.

Mentioned by more than one group.

I. There is a concern over fire and appropriate protection measures. Many builders have not installed smoke alarms and easy access to fire escapes in many cases does not exist.

Fire detectors and easy access to fire exits should be mandated by law.

Mentioned by more than one group.
(F/S/L)

J. Some seniors do not know the proper procedures to take when repairs are needed in public housing.

Seniors and management need to be better educated on how to communicate more fully to each other.

Mentioned by one group.
(S/L)

K. Seniors have a very difficult time when forced to move to another apartment.

A transfer system should be set up to help seniors move.

Mentioned by one group.
(S/L)

Q: What can be done to assist older homeowners to maintain their homes?

A. High taxes (school and local) are causing many of the elderly to lose their homes.

Make taxation adjustments for elderly homeowners.

Mentioned by most groups
(F/S/L)

B. The impact of full assessment on elderly homeowners is unfair.

Give the elderly a tax break!

Mentioned by more than one group
(S/F/L)

C. Home maintenance can be a serious financial burden for the elderly.

1. Establish home repair programs for older people.

Mentioned by most groups
(F/S/L)

2. Make home repair costs for the elderly tax deductible.

D. Home heating costs are too high.

Increase funding for fuel-assistance programs.

Mentioned by most groups
(F/S/L)

E. Snow removal is a problem for many older people.

Develop programs to assist the elderly in snow removal.

Mentioned by one group

F. Individuals in the lowest income brackets receive many services from different programs while those just above the limits cannot receive the help they need to keep them out of poverty.

There should be more flexible income guidelines for many of the programs for older people.

Mentioned by more than one group

ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS

STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS/ CONCERNS

RECOMMENDATION

PERVASIVENESS (ACTION LEVEL)

- | | | |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| G. Some seniors are not able to prepare meals in their homes. | The nutrition services program should be expanded in the area of home delivered meals. | Mentioned by more than one group |
| H. Some of the housing the elderly live in is unsafe. | Annual, free safety inspections should be conducted on seniors home. | Mentioned by more than one group |
| I. Legislation is necessary in order for seniors to be able to draw against equity in their home for both maintenance and income purposes. | | Mentioned by many groups
(F/S) |

Q: What long-range energy solutions should be sought?

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| A. Presently utilized forms of energy are too costly. | Increase exploration of alternative energy sources. | Mentioned by more than one group.
(F) |
| B. Energy assistance programs have eligibility requirements that are too rigid. | Expand eligibility requirements for energy assistance programs. | Mentioned by more than one group. |
| C. At a time when energy resources are decreasing and energy costs are increasing, the older home owner finds him or herself in an older home with very poor overall weatherization and insulation protections. | A one-time subsidy should be developed to help families in need of home weatherization improvements. | Mentioned by more than one group.
(F/S/L) |

Q: How can the design of our transportation programs be improved to better serve the needs of older people?

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| A. Transportation resources in rural areas is inadequate or non-existent. | Expand transportation services in rural areas. | Mentioned by many groups. |
| B. Older people have difficulty in getting to medical facilities and to grocery stores. | Program like Dial-a-Ride should be more widely instituted. | Mentioned by many groups. |
| C. Public Transportation is considered unsafe by many of the elderly. | | Mentioned by more than one group.
(S/L) |
| D. Transportation is expensive for the elderly. | Reduce fares. | Mentioned by many groups. |
| E. Present transportation programs are not adequate to meet the needs of the elderly. They are often fragmented, uncoordinated and reach only easily accessed major roads. | Transportation programs should be increased far beyond their present level. | Mentioned by almost every group. |

**STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS/
CONCERNS**

RECOMMENDATIONS

**PERVASIVENESS
(ACTION LEVEL)**

F. There is a "Natural helping Network" in rural areas — older people who drive. Yet these drivers live on fixed incomes and cannot afford soaring gas prices or insurance.

The "Natural helping Network" should be subsidized to include maintenance costs, fuel and reduced insurance rates.

Mentioned by more than one group.

G. Presently, in the design of the current transportation system, seniors face the very basic problem of boarding buses used by the public.

A separate transportation system should be set up for seniors.

Mentioned by more than one group.

Q: What effect will the energy crisis have on providing transportation and other services for the elderly?

A. The energy crisis will result in a cut-back of services for the elderly.

Mentioned by more than one group.

(F/S)

B. Older people will become more dependent upon public transportation as a result of the energy crisis.

Improvements in the public transportation system are recommended.

Mentioned by more than one group.

(F/S)

C. The energy crisis could result in the isolation of many older people. This could lead to an increase in social, physical and mental problems.

Mentioned by more than one group.

D. The energy crisis will intensify the economic problems of the elderly.

Mentioned by more than one group.

SAFETY AND THE ELDERLY

The issues of Safety and Security were frequently mentioned concerns of Seniors participating in the community forums. Older people tend to feel unsafe on the streets and in housing projects. Many seniors reported that they were unaware of crime-prevention programs. A lot of people felt that particular attention should be given to the special needs of the elderly crime victim. Bilingual crime victims assistance programs, legal assistance programs, and telephone hot lines should be established to help the elderly deal with crime. It was also recommended that federal money be used to establish more anti-crime programs. It was suggested that area agencies on Aging become advocates for crime prevention programs.

Many older persons are fearful of venturing outside their own homes or apartments thereby increasing their social isolation. This in turn prevents them from getting needed services and leading fulfilling lives.

**STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS/
CONCERNS**

RECOMMENDATIONS

**PERVASIVENESS
(ACTION LEVEL)**

A. Older people feel unsafe on the streets.

More police protection is needed.

Mentioned by most groups

B. Many housing projects which have elderly occupants lack adequate security.

Provide more housing project security systems.

Mentioned by most groups

C. There is an apparent rise in the cases of "elder-abuse".

Methods for protecting elderly persons must be more fully developed.

Mentioned by more than one group

D. Seniors are not aware of protective measures against muggings, burglaries, etc.

Federal money should be used to establish more anti-crime programs.

Mentioned by more than one group
(F/S/L)

E. Idle teenagers present problems for the elderly because they have nothing to do and find the elderly easy prey.

Money should be allocated to train and employ the young.

Mentioned by one group
(L)

F. Standard Crime Prevention Programs are not effective in minority neighborhoods.

Bilingual crime victims assistance programs, legal assistance programs, and telephone hot lines should be established to help the minority elderly.

Mentioned by more than one group

G. Attention should be given to the special needs of elderly crime victims.

The Crime victim compensation board Statute should be amended to provide awards to people 60 years of age and older for property loss and/or damage incurred during a crime.

Mentioned by more than one group

H. Area agencies on Aging should be assigned responsibility of being an advocate in developing and coordinating local community efforts to prevent crimes against the elderly.

Mentioned by more than one group

I. Legislation should be developed to require effective planning for the reduction of crime and fraud against the elderly.

Mentioned by more than one group

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

Under the title Physical and Mental Health, the most widespread concern was for the expansion of in-home health services. It was repeatedly stressed in the Community Forum reports that there is a lack of services to keep people at home and independent. It was also noted that there is inadequate funding for existing home services. In general, the forum reports indicated that the problems associated with home-care for the elderly must be dealt with by the Federal, State and Local levels working together.

Further recommendations for improving health care included the liberalization and expansion of medicare benefits, utilization of sliding scale fees for services (supplemented by Federal dollars); increases in the type and scope of services; and up-grading of publicity and outreach efforts. The reports consistently cited the need for medicare coverage of eyeglasses, dentures, hearing-aids and certain drugs. An increase in the number of preventive medicine programs, simplification of medicare forms and the establishment of standardized fees for doctors accepting medicare patients were also mentioned.

Several of the Community Forums reported that fear is commonly associated with mental health problems. The elderly who have such problems frequently do not seek mental health assistance because they fear social stigma. In addition to emotional barriers there also exist problems related to a general lack of information about mental illness and related treatment programs. One of the most commonly mentioned forms of mental stress among the elderly is depression.

**STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS/
CONCERNS**

RECOMMENDATIONS

**PERVASIVENESS
(ACTION LEVEL)**

Q: What types of health programs, services or benefits do the elderly most desire and how can the government assure that future programs meet these expectations?

A. There is a lack of in-home health services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Liberalize funding from medicare 2. Have in-home services available on a sliding income scale 	Mentioned by almost every group (F/S/L)
B. There is a lack of adequate transportation to health facilities	Establish flexible means of transportation such as "Dial-a-Ride", particularly in the rural areas	Mentioned by many groups (F)
C. The elderly desire an increase in preventive health-care programs to prevent institutionalization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish Mobile Health Centers particularly for the rural areas 2. Establish a sliding scale for preventive health care 3. Broaden the scope of in-home nutrition programs 4. Have recreation programs focus on including the elderly 	Mentioned by many groups (F/S/L)
D. Older people on fixed incomes find it difficult to purchase health related items such as glasses, hearing aids, dentures and drugs	Expand medicare coverage	Mentioned by many groups (F)
E. The elderly are not well-versed in the legalities associated with their health care rights and protections. Legal advice is expensive	Legal clinics should be established with sliding scale rates.	Mentioned by more than one group
F. Catastrophic illnesses like heart attacks, cancer and strokes rapidly deplete the life-savings of many older people	A comprehensive National Health Insurance should be instituted	Mentioned by more than one group
G. Many of the elderly live in fear of harassment and violence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase crime prevention programs 2. Provide more police protection on the streets 3. Control elder abuse by more clearly defining and enforcing adult protective laws 	Mentioned by many groups (F/S)
H. The opinion of the individual should be included in a determination of the mental health status of an older person	1. Incorporate the opinions of the individual and his/her relatives in determining the mental health status of an older person	Mentioned by more than one group

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS/ CONCERNS

RECOMMENDATIONS

PERVASIVENESS (ACTION LEVEL)

Q: What are the special needs of the frail elderly population and how can health services be structured to meet the demands of this and other subgroups of the elderly population?

A. Cost and availability prohibit the utilization of household aide services	In-home services should be both available and cost reimbursable on a sliding-scale	Mentioned by many groups (F/S/L)
B. Many frail elderly who can no longer live alone do not necessarily need to be institutionalized	1. There is a need for more congregate housing with varying levels of support services including nutrition programs, meals-on-wheels, friendly visiting and in-home care	Mentioned by almost every group (F/S/L)
C. There is a lack of preventive health measures including patient teaching	Increase funding for preventive health programs	Mentioned by almost every group
D. There is a lack of funding for eyeglasses, hearing aids and drugs	Review and update Medicare	Mentioned by many groups
E. There is a problem with frail elderly who neglect to take their prescribed medications, or take incorrect dosages (drug abuse)		Mentioned by more than one group
F. There is a concern about the mental deterioration of the elderly who are house-bound and isolated	Increase activities and services for the home-bound elderly	Mentioned by many groups (F/S/L)
G. There are frail, elderly who are so mentally ill that the family or a nursing home cannot care for them, but not ill enough to be admitted to a psychiatric hospital	Small residential mental health care centers should be established	Mentioned by more than one group (S/L)
H. Senior Centers need to develop programs for the disabled elderly		Mentioned by more than one group

Q: What types of changes in the Medicare program will best serve the needs of the elderly?

A. The medicare forms are too complicated, particularly Part B. Often times older people have no local assistance in filling out the forms	1. Simplify medicare forms particularly Part B 2. Provide for form filling assistance to medicare applicants	Mentioned by many groups (F)
B. The medicare program has gaps in coverage	Expand medicare to include coverage for long-term hospitalization and health related items such as eyeglasses, dentures, hearing aids and drugs	Mentioned by almost every group (F/S)
C. Families who provide care for their ill elderly members often suffer financial hardship	Develop a method for reimbursing expenses incurred by families who care for their ill elderly members	Mentioned by only one group

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS/ CONCERNS

RECOMMENDATIONS

PERVASIVENESS (ACTION LEVEL)

D. Medicare does not cover preventive health care costs	Expand medicare coverage to include preventive health care costs	Mentioned by more than one group
E. Many older people do not understand the extent of medicare coverage	Establish programs to increase older people's knowledge of medicare benefits and limitations	Mentioned by only one group (F/S/L)
F. Many doctors demand payment upon the administration of their services	Doctors need some kind of incentive to accept medicare and to wait for their payment	Mentioned by more than one group
G. Most social security recipients between the ages of 55 and 62 in need of assistance with medical bills are not eligible for medicare. Prevalent among this group are widows and displaced homemakers		Mentioned by one group

Q: What types of bureaucratic barriers exist for the elderly in receiving needed health services?

A. The large amounts of form filling and "red-tape" associated with health care applications tends to frighten and confuse many older people	A simplification of health care application procedures is indicated	Mentioned by more than one group
B. Income guidelines and regulations are too stringent and not uniform	Uniformity and flexibility of income requirements is necessary	Mentioned by more than one group
C. Many elderly people are not aware of available health services	Health care services for the elderly should be publicized more widely, particularly through the media of TV and newspapers	Mentioned by more than one group
D. Many older people are not sufficiently covered for catastrophic illnesses		Mentioned by more than one group (S/F/L)
E. In the rural areas there is a lack of accessible and coordinated health services	Expand and coordinate health services for the rural elderly	Mentioned by more than one group (S/F/L)
F. There is inadequate funding for existing services	Adequate funding should be provided for existing programs	Mentioned by more than one group
G. Access to health programs or facilities are often a problem for the elderly	Better transportation is needed to enable the elderly to fully utilize health programs	Mentioned by more than one group (S/F/L)
H. Negative attitudes exist among physicians, nurses and nursing homes in accepting or dealing with patients on medicare	Better monitoring of health facilities and providers are needed	Mentioned by more than one group
I. Governmental regulations have encouraged institutionalization instead of in-home health care. Older people want to remain independent for as long as possible	The money needs to be rerouted to strengthen in-home health care programs	Mentioned by more than one group

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

**STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS/
CONCERNS**

RECOMMENDATIONS

**PERVASIVENESS
(ACTION LEVEL)**

Q: Who should be responsible for coordinating health care and social services for the elderly?

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| A. There is a lack of information about services and programs for the elderly | State and local offices for the Aging should assume a lead role in providing information to older people | Mentioned by more than one group
(S/L) |
| B. There are not many informed elderly who can adequately represent the needs of the aging population | Increase efforts to develop leadership qualities among the elderly so they can provide more input regarding the programs which serve them | Mentioned by one group
(F/S/L) |

Q: Should the Federal Government establish a national health insurance program?

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| A. Those who are ineligible for medicaid often cannot pay for needed services; such as, medicine, homecare, doctor visits and transportation. This situation often leaves older people with no treatment for minor illnesses which might then grow into major, costly and life-threatening illnesses | Establish a national health plan to provide full coverage for all seniors | Mentioned by more than one group
(F) |
|--|---|---|

Q: What kinds of mental health services or assistance are needed by older people living in the Community?

- | | | |
|---|--|----------------------------------|
| A. Elderly have a fear associated with mental health problems | Information should be made available on all types of mental health problems and services | Mentioned by more than one group |
| B. Many frail, mentally ill aged persons cannot avail themselves of existing psychiatric facilities, community mental health centers or hospitals | Crisis teams are needed, which include several disciplines, to work in the home and provide a full spectrum of services to the frail elderly | Mentioned by many groups |
| C. There are few, if any, preventive programs geared to meet the needs of the elderly in the community | | Mentioned by one group |

SOCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS

The general concern for Social Support Systems was seen as a need for an increase in community based services to facilitate the elderly's independence. Many forums indicated that more funding should be made available for the coordination of services. Several groups thought that State and Federal guidelines discouraged seniors from trying to improve their life situations. For example, seniors who wish to share living space are often penalized by a reduction of S.S.I. benefits. Many groups saw existing programs as relatively unknown or inaccessible because of poor transportation and information services. Eligibility requirements often inhibit or preclude the utilization of social support services by the elderly.

Another problem affecting independent living is the lack of Senior Citizen housing with varying degrees of Social Support Services. In some cases it has been necessary to institutionalize elderly persons who, with the proper Social Support, could have remained at home.

The issue of the elderly living with relatives evoked conflicting responses. Some groups felt it was the responsibility of the family to care for their ill elderly members. Others thought that there should be more options open to the family. All said that financial assistance should be given to families who choose to keep their elderly relatives in their own homes.

Many community forums referred to the reluctance of localities to expand community based Social Service programs because of associated tax increases. It was stated that the elderly do not want to be a tax burden but do want a fair share of the tax dollar.

<i>STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS/ CONCERNS</i>	<i>RECOMMENDATIONS</i>	<i>PERVASIVENESS (ACTION LEVEL)</i>
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Q: What should be the extent of family responsibility for adult members who are frail?

- | | | |
|---|--|----------------------------------|
| A. Many families cannot afford to keep frail elderly members at home or to maintain them in their own homes | There should be an increase in supports for families who wish to keep elderly relatives at home or to maintain them in their own homes | Mentioned by many groups |
| B. Many elderly persons do not wish to become dependent upon their children | | Mentioned by more than one group |
| C. Many families as well as the elderly themselves are unaware of available support services | Information and referral services should be more widely established | Mentioned by many groups |

Q: How should public policies enhance and supplement the care provided by informal support networks to frail adults?

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| A. Policy makers often seem insensitive to the impact a policy change might have on an elderly person | | Mentioned by more than one group
(F/S/L) |
| B. Eligibility requirements often inhibit the utilization of support services by older people | | Mentioned by more than one group |
| C. Health programs pay more to keep a person institutionalized than to help an elderly person remain independent | The frail elderly and their families should receive benefits to make it possible for them to receive needed care at home | Mentioned by many groups |
| D. Families need assistance to support and care for their elderly relatives | Respite programs and day-care should be provided by the formal networks to supplement family care of the frail aged | Mentioned by more than one group |

SOCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS

<i>STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS/ CONCERNS</i>	<i>RECOMMENDATIONS</i>	<i>PERVASIVENESS (ACTION LEVEL)</i>
Q: What improvements should be made in our formal social service delivery systems?		
A. We lack Senior Citizen housing that includes varying degrees of support systems	Develop Senior Citizen housing that addresses the long-term needs of its residents	Mentioned by more than one group (F/S/L)
B. In-home services for the elderly are either unavailable or inadequate		Mentioned by more than one group (F/S/L)
C. Many older persons either are unaware of available services or find existing services inaccessible	1. Information regarding services should be more effectively disseminated.	Mentioned by more than one group
	2. Service accessibility should be assured	
D. When an older person reaches out and contacts an agency there is often a referral but no follow up	Establish innovative follow-up systems for elderly persons. Utilization of volunteers might be indicated	Mentioned by one group
E. There is little coordination between physical health, mental health and social services for the elderly	A Continuum of Care should be promoted by developing linkages between physical, mental and social services for the elderly	Mentioned by more than one group
F. There is a need for a better system of monitoring programs in order to help them operate more effectively		Mentioned by more than one group
G. At present many agencies compete for available program funds rather than attempt to coordinate and fill in service gaps	Funds should be made available for the coordination of programs for the elderly	Mentioned by many groups (F/S/L)
H. Some program guidelines discourage seniors from trying to obtain a better life style	Seniors attempting to improve their life style by sharing their living quarters to cut expenses, etc. should not be penalized by a reduction in SSI benefits	Mentioned by more than one group
I. Transportation problems limit participation in existing social service programs	Transportation "to and from" existing social service programs should be expanded	Mentioned by many groups
J. Regulations and current funding patterns reflect an urban bias and do not take into account the special needs of the rural elderly	Funding patterns should reflect local needs	Mentioned by more than one group

Q: How can we finance the expansion of community-based services for the elderly?

A. The work force views funding of programs for the elderly as just another tax burden	Attitudes toward the elderly must be changed	Mentioned by more than one group
B. Older people are not receiving an equitable share of the tax dollar		Mentioned by one group
C. Increased community based services for the elderly, especially those which promote independence and residence in the community, are needed	There should be an end to inappropriate institutionalization of the elderly. Community based services should be expanded in order to help people remain independent for as long as possible	Mentioned by more than one group
D. Government funding should be increased to maintain basic services for the elderly with fees based on a sliding scale	Sliding-scale payments for services should be encouraged wherever fees are charged	Mentioned by one group (F)

Q: What specific action should be taken to expand the delivery of long-term care so that it includes the provision of social services?

A. There is no single accepted definition of the term "long-term care"		Mentioned by more than one group
B. There are many gaps in services for the frail elderly	Case management should be required of every service agency	Mentioned by many groups
C. There is a need for supplemental services for the home-bound elderly	Home health care programs in particular must be expanded to meet the needs of the home-bound elderly	Mentioned by more than one group

ECONOMIC SECURITY

Issues associated with Economic Security were widely discussed at the community forums. Of primary concern was inflation and its impact upon older people living on fixed incomes. Almost every group reporting has mentioned that Social Security increases are too low and do not keep up with inflation. Basic expenses are cited as being "extremely difficult to meet". Many people indicated that they are worried about the possible taxation of Social Security and fear that funds may dry up. Concern was expressed for working women who "lose" the money they pay into the Social Security system when they claim benefits on their husbands' Social Security account. Women are further concerned about the large Social Security payment reductions they must face upon the advent of widowhood.

Recommendations for coping with problems related to economic security included establishing a "floor" for Social Security income; maintenance of joint Social Security accounts for married couples; prevention of taxation of Social Security income; and the provision of twice yearly Social Security payment increases. There were also conflicting recommendations. At one forum, it was suggested that there should be no Social Security benefits for persons over 65 years of age who are still working. Another group indicated they would like to see an elimination of a ceiling on earnings for all Social Security recipients.

Regarding pensions, it has been recommended that a "surviving spouse" clause be made mandatory; that pensions be increased and not taxed; that pensions should have a built-in cost of living adjustment and that it is the role of government to subsidize the private sector in its provision of reasonable pension plans. Taxes on savings and pensions are considered burdensome.

Almost every group reported that there is a need to establish stronger guidelines to make all pension plans equitable and transferable in order to strengthen private retirement programs.

ECONOMIC SECURITY

*STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS/
CONCERNS*

RECOMMENDATIONS

*PERVASIVENESS
(ACTION LEVEL)*

Q: Should private pensions be subject to federal and state income taxes?

A. The taxation of pensions cuts into the older person's buying power

No taxation of pensions

Mentioned by almost every group
(F/S)

B. Pensions should be taxed over a designated level

Mentioned by more than one group

Q: What types of actions can be taken to expand employment opportunities for the elderly?

A. The elderly are forced to retire at a certain age

Abolish age retirement nationally

Mentioned by more than one group
(F)

B. Stop penalizing the elderly for working

Eliminate the earnings test for Social Security recipients

Mentioned by many groups

C. There are not enough parttime jobs for the elderly

1. Create more parttime jobs for the elderly

Mentioned by many groups

2. There should be more training programs for older people in industry

3. The unions should cooperate on this issue

D. The elderly feel pressured by younger people who think they are "stealing" their jobs

There should be more public education—on the rights and role of the older worker

Mentioned by more than one group

E. The elderly shouldn't take youth's jobs like CETA, but should be given assistance instead

Mentioned by one group

Q: Will the laws that are already enacted to prohibit mandatory retirement and age discrimination in employment be sufficient?

A. Existing legislation in reference to mandatory retirement and age discrimination require re-enforcement

Rigorous enforcement of employment sex/age anti-discrimination measures need to be implemented

Mentioned by more than one group
(F/S)

NEW YORK STATE OFFICE FOR THE AGING GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON AGING WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON AGING

April 29, 1981

Dear Participant:

As you can see by the attached schedule, you will have a great deal to accomplish during this Conference. Difficult decisions in many complex areas will have to be made in a relatively short time. Therefore, the active involvement of all participants will be essential to the success of this effort.

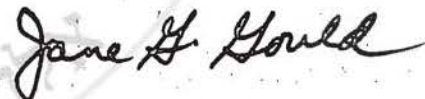
Given the time constraints, it has been necessary to develop a fairly tight schedule. Your support in following the time frame listed on the agenda will be greatly appreciated.

We have ambitious goals for the Conference, and I am certain that together we will be successful here in Albany as well as in Washington in December of 1981.

Please use the attached Conference Information and Checklist before you leave home to ensure that you are prepared with all necessary materials.

I am looking forward to meeting you at the Conference.

Sincerely,



Jane G. Gould
State Coordinator

Attachments

OVERVIEW OF CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

SUNDAY, MAY 10, 1981

12:00 noon - 3:00 p.m.

REGISTRATION (Empire State Plaza, North East Gallery)

Slide Show, Entertainment, Refreshments, etc. (Convention Center)

3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

OPENING SESSION (Convention Center)

Invocation and Preview of Conference Process - Remarks by special guests

5:00 p.m. - 6:15 p.m.

DINNER (Empire State Plaza Cafeterias)

6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

MINI-GROUP SESSIONS

Five groups of about 25 persons each will meet separately to review the policies and recommendations relevant to their pre-registered issue area. (Meeting room assignment included in registration packet)

MONDAY, MAY 11, 1981

9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

ISSUE AREA GROUP MEETINGS - Morning Session

There will be six Issue Area Group Meetings: 1) Social Support Systems; 2) Economic Security; 3) Environmental Systems; 4) Physical and Mental Health; 5) Creating an Age Integrated Society; 6) Older Americans as a Growing National Resource. Participants will attend assigned Issue Area meetings to discuss and vote on policies to be considered during Plenary Session on Tuesday. Participants will also discuss the recommendations for their Issue Area.

1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

LUNCH (Empire State Plaza Cafeterias)

2:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

ISSUE AREA GROUP MEETING - Afternoon Session

Participants continue to discuss recommendations. At the end of the session, a vote is taken to determine the top ten recommendations for their Issue Area. In all, 10 recommendations from each Issue Area --60 in total --will be sent to the Plenary Session on Tuesday. At the end of the afternoon session, an opportunity will be afforded for the presentation of alternative recommendations not previously discussed. Those alternative recommendations receiving significant support will be considered by the Plenary Session.

5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

DINNER (Empire State Plaza Cafeterias)

7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE'S SENIOR CITIZENS' DAY CEREMONIES (sponsored by the New York State Senate and Assembly) (Convention Center)

8:30 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.

RECEPTION (sponsored by the New York State Office for the Aging) (Convention Center)

TUESDAY, MAY 13, 1981

7:00 a.m. - 8:15 a.m.

BREAKFAST (Empire State Plaza Cafeterias or Hotels)

8:30 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.

PLENARY SESSION (Convention Center)

An opportunity for questions, answers and comments from the floor will be given for numerous policies and a total of 60 recommendations approved in the Monday Issue Area Group Meetings. The policies will be approved or disapproved as each Issue Area is discussed.

11:15 - 12:00 noon

ADDRESS BY GOVERNOR CAREY

12:00 - 12:45 p.m.

LUNCH (Box lunches provided by Conference in Empire State Plaza Meeting Rooms)

12:45 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

PLENARY SESSION CONTINUES

After all six Issue Areas have been discussed, ballots will be cast by participants to select 30 of the 60 program recommendations. All 30 recommendations, together with the approved policies, will constitute the platform of the New York State Delegation to the White House Conference on Aging. Within the 30 recommendations, the 10 receiving the most votes will be identified as the priority platform recommendations.

2:30 - 3:00 p.m.

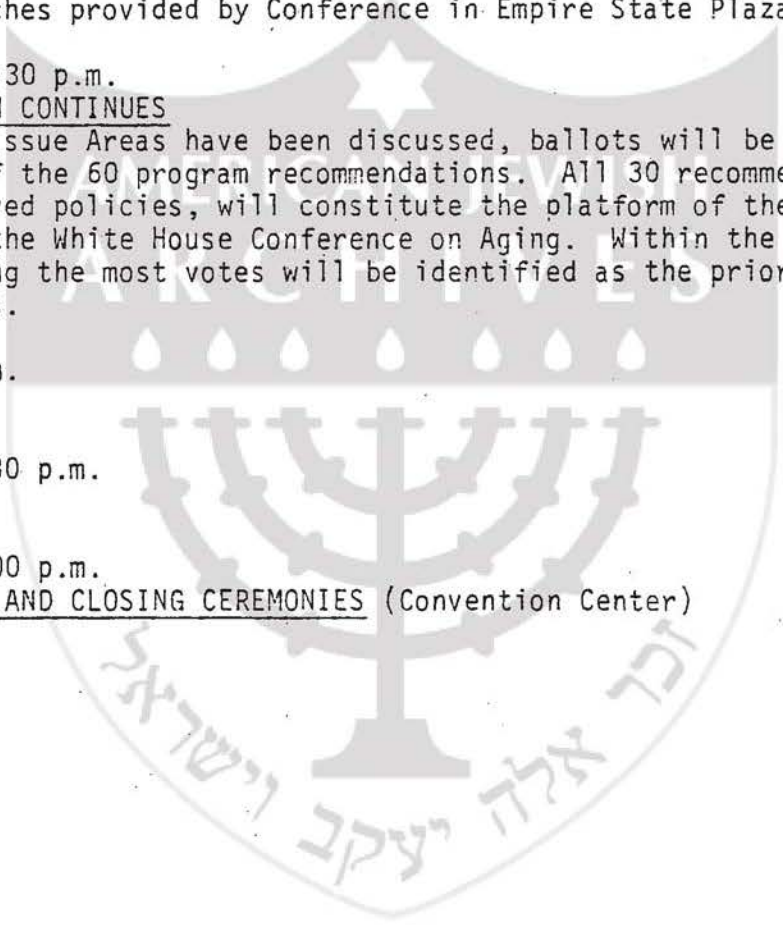
BREAK

3:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

GUEST SPEAKER

3:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

VOTING RESULTS AND CLOSING CEREMONIES (Convention Center)



ALBANY



ALBANY AIRPORT

Quality Inn

Best Western Thruway House

Travel Lodge Ramada Inn

Albany-Rensselaer AMTRAK station

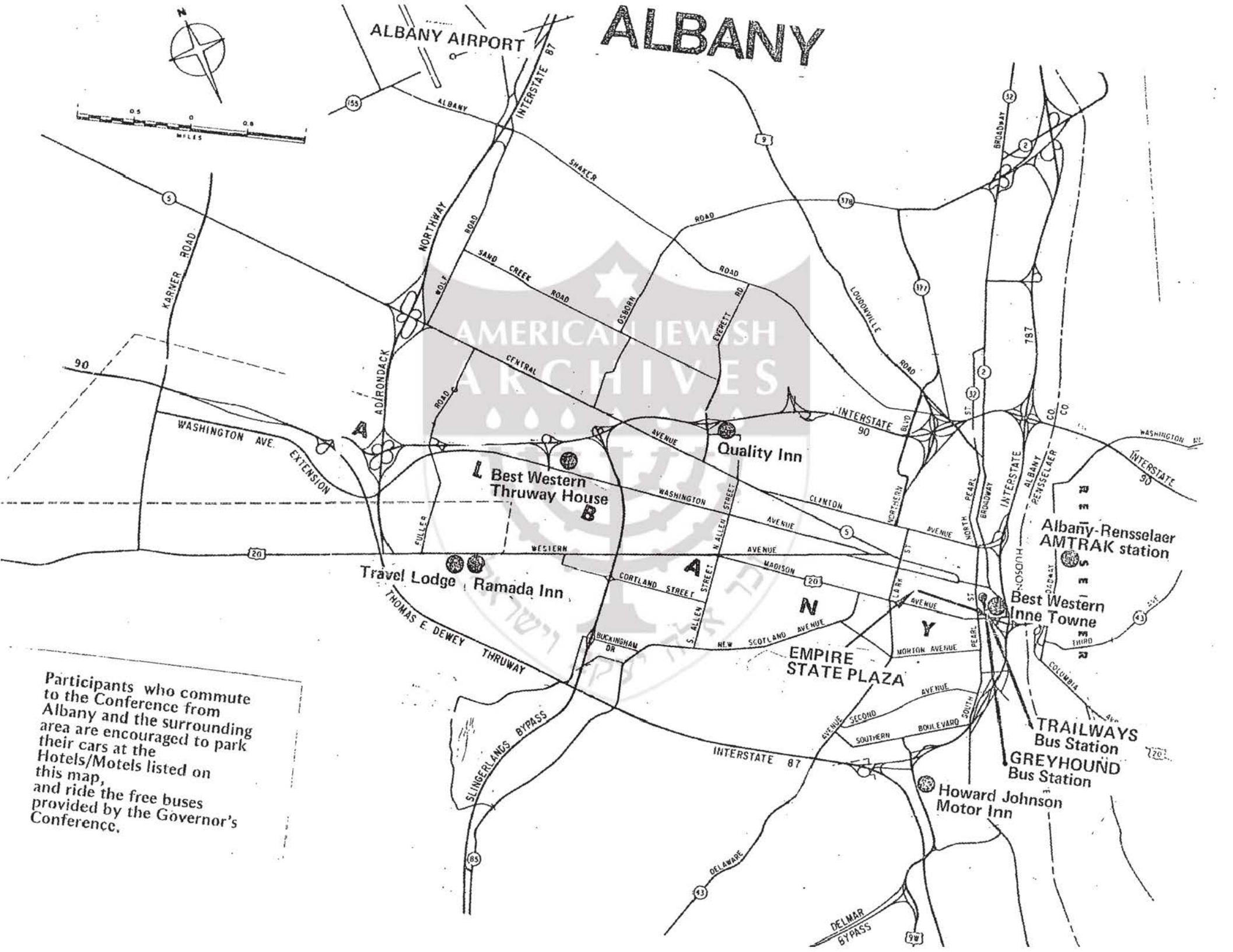
Best Western Inne Towne

EMPIRE STATE PLAZA

TRAILWAYS Bus Station
GREYHOUND Bus Station

Howard Johnson Motor Inn

Participants who commute to the Conference from Albany and the surrounding area are encouraged to park their cars at the Hotels/Motels listed on this map, and ride the free buses provided by the Governor's Conference.



CONFERENCE INFORMATION AND CHECK LIST

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT:

- You bring your issue papers to the Conference
- You have filled out and sent in the Issue Preference form and all other Conference forms
- You have made your hotel reservation*

Transportation Services

Free transportation to and from the motels to the Empire State Plaza will be available beginning Sunday, May 10, 1981. Please use this service. Parking facilities at the Conference area will be scarce during the Governor's Conference.

Obtain Conference transportation schedules at the hospitality desks set up at each motel. Any special transportation needs or request should be given to the receptionist at the hospitality desk upon your arrival at the motel.

At the close of the Conference on May 12 at 4:00 p.m., participants will be returned to their motels. Those needing transportation from their motel to train, bus station or airport must sign up for this service at the hospitality desk upon arrival. Persons leaving prior to the close of the Conference will be provided transportation to motels; however, they will be responsible for their own transportation to public carriers for departure.

For your safety and convenience, we encourage you to use the transportation services available.

Dining Services

Excellent dining facilities are available at the Empire State Plaza Cafeterias. Cafeteria 3, adjacent to the meeting area and bus arrival area will open at 7:00 a.m. for Conference Participants Only. Price range for breakfast will be from \$.50 to under \$3.00, with no tax and gratuity required. Lunch and dinner are also available at reasonable prices.

Breakfast facilities are also available at all motels except the Travelodge, which has a restaurant located next door.

Phone Message Service

In case you must be contacted during Conference hours, a message can be left for you by calling the following Toll Free number:

1-800-342-9871 or locally, (518) 474-2151

After Conference hours, please leave your hotel/motel number where you may be reached.

*If unable to attend, please cancel your hotel reservations, or you will be charged for your room.



THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

STANLEY FINK
SPEAKER

April 29, 1981

Rabbi M. Tannenbaum
Interreligious Affairs
165 East 56th Street
New York, New York 10022

Dear Rabbi:

We are writing to enlist your support for our bill, A.100/S.3800, which would outlaw age discrimination in employment in New York State. A.100, one of the most important civil rights measures to be considered by the Legislature in recent years, has already passed in the Assembly (its third year in a row with overwhelming bipartisan support) and is presently awaiting action by the Senate. Although this measure has never passed the Senate or even been considered for a vote, we are hopeful that, aided by newly published data and the support of groups and individuals such as yourselves, the Senate will also pass this bill and make it law in 1981.

Our country's new President recently celebrated his 70th birthday, but in New York State neither he nor any other person of the same age -- regardless of their qualifications and ability to do the job -- would have any legal right to continue working at a job he or she did perfectly well and wanted to continue doing. Nor would any such individual have any legal recourse if he or she were denied a promotion or an available part-time job simply because of age.

An employee should be judged on the basis of his or her job performance, and not on the basis of certain characteristics, including race, sex, and religion, among others, which are irrelevant to job performance. Age is another such characteristic. Yet, we continue to allow an employer, through a process labeled "retirement", to terminate the employment of an able worker simply because he or she reaches a certain age. Such discrimination, based not on job performance but on a characteristic just as irrelevant to that performance as race or sex, is no less unjust than other forms of discrimination which we, as a society, uniformly condemn. It is simply indefensible to allow the practice of age discrimination in employment to continue.

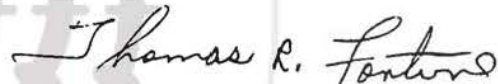
Although there is no justification for discrimination, this year there will again be, no doubt, individuals who will argue against A.100 on the basis of other concerns, such as that older workers are less productive, or that the effects of A.100 on business and the economy would be harmful. Such arguments are based on myths, misinformation, and misrepresentation -- not on facts. We have the facts and are sharing them with you. The enclosures are but a fraction of the data demonstrating that the recognition of an older person's right to work will not have an adverse effect on business. We trust you will find this information useful and interesting.

Before closing, we would like to make two final points. Some people have suggested that the Legislature should compromise and enact legislation to abolish age discrimination in employment in the public sector only. We oppose this suggestion. We cannot properly protect the rights of people to continue working by selectively recognizing the civil rights of only certain older people, while ignoring the identical rights of other older people. Moreover, the bulk of retirees are from the private sector, not the public. The second point is that the Assembly has already passed other measures this session, as it has in the past, to safeguard and promote the independence of older New Yorkers. This bill, A.100/S.3800, is a vital component of an overall effort to ensure that older people are able to remain independent. Your assistance is needed if this bill is to become law.

Age discrimination in employment is a practice whose time has passed. Thus, we are asking nearly 1500 individuals such as yourself, and the organizations you may represent, to help us in securing passage of A.100/S.3800 by informing the Senate of your support -- and of the facts.

Very truly yours,


Stanley Fink
Speaker


Thomas Fortune
Chairman of Committees


Paul Harenberg
Chairman of Committee on Aging

Enclosures

STATE OF NEW YORK

100

1981-1982 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

(Prefiled)

January 7, 1981

Introduced by M. of A. FORTUNE, FINK, HARENBERG, MONTANO, PASSANNANTE, GRANNIS—Multi-Sponsored by—M. of A. ABRAMSON, BARBARO, BIANCHI, BOYLAND, BRANCA, BURROWS, BUTLER, CHESBRO, COHEN, CONNELLY, CONNERS, D'ANDREA, DANIELS, DAVIS, DEARIE, DELTORO, DUGAN, ENGEL, EVE, FARRELL, FELDMAN, FERRIS, FINNERAN, FRIEDMAN, GOLDSTEIN, GOTTFRIED, GRABER, GREEN, GRIFFITH, HEVESI, HINCHEY, HOBLOCK, HOCHBRUECKNER, HOYT, JACOBS, JOHNSON, KEANE, KIDDER, LAFAYETTE, LANE, LASHER, LEVY, LEWIS, LIPSCHUTZ, MARCHISELLI, McCABE, H. M. MILLER, MURPHY, MURTAUGH, NADLER, NEWBURGER, NINE, ORAZIO, PILITTERE, PROUD, RETTALIATA, ROBLES, RUGGIERO, SALAND, SANDERS, SCHIMMINGER, SCHMIDT, SEMINERIO, SERRANO, SHAFER, SIEGEL, SILVER, SIWEK, SKELOS, SMOLER, SPANO, STRANIERE, E. C. SULLIVAN, VIGGIANO, D. B. WALSH, S. P. WALSH, WEINSTEIN, WEPRIN, WERTZ, WILSON, YEVOLI, ZIMMER—read once and referred to the Committee on Aging

AN ACT to amend the executive law and the retirement and social security law, in relation to discrimination in employment because of age and eliminating mandatory retirement due to age for most workers

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

- 1 Section 1. Subdivision three-a of section two hundred ninety-six of
- 2 the executive law, as amended by chapter eight hundred three of the laws
- 3 of nineteen hundred seventy-five, is amended to read as follows:
- 4 3-a. It shall be an unlawful discriminatory practice:
- 5 (a) For an employer or licensing agency, because an individual is
- 6 [between the ages of] eighteen [and sixty-five] years of age or older,
- 7 to refuse to hire or employ or license or to bar or to terminate from
- 8 employment such individual, or to discriminate against such individual
- 9 in promotion, compensation or in terms, conditions or privileges of
- 10 employment.

EXPLANATION—Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [] is old law to be omitted.

LBD1-20-43-79

1 (b) For any employer, licensing agency or employment agency to print
2 or circulate or cause to be printed or circulated any statement, adver-
3 tisement or publication, or to use any form of application for em-
4 ployment or to make any inquiry in connection with prospective em-
5 ployment, which expresses, directly or indirectly, any limitation, spe-
6 cification or discrimination respecting individuals [between the ages
7 of] eighteen [and sixty-five] years of age or older, or any intent to
8 make any such limitation, specification or discrimination.

9 (c) For any employer, licensing agency or employment agency to dis-
10 charge or otherwise discriminate against any person because he has op-
11 posed any practices forbidden under this article or because he has filed
12 a complaint, testified or assisted in any proceeding under this article.

13 (d) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be
14 subject to termination or retirement from employment on the basis of
15 age, except where age is a bona fide occupational qualification reasona-
16 bly necessary to the normal operation of a particular business, or as
17 otherwise specified in paragraph (e) herein, and article fifteen of the
18 retirement and social security law.

19 (e) In the event of a conflict between the provisions of this subdivi-
20 ision and the provisions of article fifteen of the retirement and social
21 security law, the provisions of article fifteen of such law shall be
22 controlling.

23 But nothing contained in this subdivision or in subdivision one of
24 this section shall be construed to prevent the termination of the em-
25 ployment of any person who is physically unable to perform his duties or
26 to affect the retirement policy or system of any employer where such
27 policy or system is not merely a subterfuge to evade the purposes of
28 said subdivisions; nor shall anything in said subdivisions be deemed to
29 preclude the varying of insurance coverages according to an employee's
30 age.

31 The provisions of this subdivision shall not affect any restriction
32 upon the activities of persons licensed by the state liquor authority
33 with respect to persons under twenty-one years of age.

34 § 2. The retirement and social security law is amended by adding a new
35 article fifteen to read as follows:

36 ARTICLE 15

37 ELIMINATION OF MANDATORY RETIREMENT

38 Section 540. Elimination of mandatory retirement.

39 § 540. Elimination of mandatory retirement. a. Notwithstanding any
40 provision of law, code, rule or regulation to the contrary and except as
41 provided in subdivision b hereof, no member of a public retirement sys-
42 tem or pension fund maintained by the state or a municipality thereof
43 nor any employee who was eligible to join such a public retirement sys-
44 tem but in lieu thereof elected an optional retirement program to which
45 his or her employer is thereby obligated to contribute, shall be
46 required to retire or separate from service on the basis of age, except
47 where age is a bona fide occupational qualification reasonably necessary
48 to the performance of his public duties.

49 b. This article shall not apply to any member of a retirement plan
50 which permits immediate retirement upon a specified period of service
51 without regard to age.

52 § 3. If any clause, sentence, paragraph or part of this act or the
53 application thereof to any person or circumstances, shall for any reason
54 be adjudged by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such
55 judgment shall not affect, impair or invalidate the remainder, and the

1 application thereof to other persons or circumstances, but shall be con-
2 fined in its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph or part
3 thereof directly involved in the controversy in which such judgment
4 shall have been rendered, and to the person or circumstances involved.
5 It is hereby declared to be the legislative intent that this act would
6 have been adopted had such invalid provisions not been included therein.
7 § 4. This act shall take effect January first, nineteen hundred
8 eighty-two, except that it shall first become applicable to employees in
9 collective bargaining units, other than employees in collective negoti-
10 ating units established pursuant to article fourteen of the civil ser-
11 vice law, upon the expiration of a valid labor-management contract in
12 effect on such date if such contract is in conflict with the provisions
13 of this act.

FISCAL NOTE.—The effect upon the public retirement systems of the state and its political subdivisions of removing a mandatory retirement age is to increase costs due to the accumulation of service credit and a higher final average salary, and to reduce costs due to the shorter pay-out time and delayed start of payments. Actual fiscal implications will be dependent upon the mortality and salary experience of members of the public retirement systems affected by this legislation.

Source: Assembly Ways and Means Committee



FROM: Assembly Speaker Stanley Fink
Senate Minority Leader Manfred Ohrenstein
Assemblyman Thomas Fortune
Senator Marty Markowitz
The Capitol
Albany, New York

Contact: David Langdon (455-3791)
Joseph Polser (455-2721)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 4, 1981

LEGISLATIVE LEADERS SEEK END TO
AGE DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT

Assembly and Senate leaders today announced the introduction of legislation (A.100/S3800) that would protect older workers who are competent, productive employees from mandatory retirement based solely on their age. This legislation will also outlaw the practice of not promoting or hiring older workers simply because of their age.

At an afternoon news conference, the bill's sponsors -- Speaker Stanley Fink, Assemblyman Thomas Fortune, Senate Democratic Leader Manfred Ohrenstein and Senator Marty Markowitz -- joined other legislators and representatives from senior citizens groups in calling for its enactment.

In a joint statement, the sponsors noted that at 70 years old, "President Ronald Reagan and other men and women his age, regardless of their qualifications and ability to do a job, have no legal right to employment in New York State, or to keep a job they might otherwise be competent to perform."

"It is inconceivable that our state, which led the nation in outlawing employment discrimination based on race, creed, color or national origin in 1945 under the leadership of Governor Thomas E. Dewey, still allows employment discrimination if the worker is over 65," they said.

Terming the proposal "one of the most important civil rights measures to be considered by the Legislature in recent years," they said the bill, which has passed the Assembly the last two sessions, strikes at a practice that is "inherently unjust and economically unsound."

Not protected by the bill are workers whose age is a bona fide occupational qualification, such as police, and fire fighters, and other workers whose jobs involve the safety of the public.

"The ability of an employer to banish an elderly worker into retirement solely because of his or her age is a concept which violates a basic, shared principle of our society," the legislators said. "The principle states that an employee should be judged on the basis of his or her job performance, not on the basis of his or her race, gender or religion which are characteristics irrelevant to job performance.

"Age is another such irrelevant characteristic. Yet, until this time New York has allowed an employer, through a process labeled 'retirement,' to terminate the employment of an able worker simply because he or she had reached a certain age. Such discrimination, based not on job performance, but on a characteristic just as irrelevant to that performance such as race or sex, is no less unjust than other forms of discrimination which we, as a society, uniformly condemn.

"Condoning this practice also excludes from the state's job market an important human resource -- the older worker, and deprives our economic sector of the skills, judgment and experience this person possesses," they said.

NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY
MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF LEGISLATION
submitted in accordance with Assembly Rule III, § 1 (e)

Bill Number: Assembly 100 Senate 3800 Memo on original draft of bill
 Memo on amended bill

Sponsors: Members of Assembly: Fortune, Fink, Harenberg, Montano, Passannante, Grannis, et al

Senators: Markowitz, Ohrenstein, et al

Introduced at the request of _____

TITLE OF BILL:

AN ACT to amend the executive law and the retirement and social security law, in relation to discrimination in employment because of age and eliminating mandatory retirement due to age for certain workers.

PURPOSE OR GENERAL IDEA OF BILL:

The purpose of this bill is to ensure that elderly people who are competent, productive workers are not forced to retire because of their age.

SUMMARY OF SPECIFIC PROVISIONS:

This bill amends the executive law and the retirement and social security law in relation to age discrimination in employment. This bill would make it illegal for an employer to refuse to hire, promote, terminate or retire a person 18 years of age or older solely because of the age of that individual. The use of any application or inquiry which expresses age discrimination is also forbidden.

There is one exception to the general mandate abolishing mandatory retirement. An employer may require the retirement of an individual because of his age if age is a bona fide occupational qualification reasonably necessary to the operation of a particular business. This narrow exception applies to instances in which employers can demonstrate that safety is a critical concern, and that necessary job skills deteriorate with age, and that individual testing for deteriorating skills is impractical.

JUSTIFICATION:

Age Discrimination in Employment

This bill strikes at a practice which is both inherently unjust and economically unsound. The ability of an employer to banish an elderly worker into retirement solely because of his age is a concept which violates a basic, shared principle of our society. That principle states that an employee should be judged on the basis of his job performance, and not on the basis of certain characteristics, including race, sex, and religion, among others, which are irrelevant to job performance. Age is another such characteristic. Yet until this time we have allowed an employer through a process labeled "retirement", to terminate the employment of an able worker simply because he had reached a certain age. Such discrimination, based not on job performance but on a characteristic just as irrelevant to that performance as race or sex, is no less unjust than other forms of discrimination which we as a society uniformly condemn. In this light, it is simply indefensible to allow the practice of age discrimination in employment to continue.

The Psychological Effects

Age discrimination in employment is unjust for other reasons as well. It is unjust because of the psychological damage it inflicts upon its victims. The psychological difficulties of aging are compounded by the practice of mandatory retirement which furthers feelings of social uselessness and loss of self-esteem. Those stripped of their job, and thus deprived of the respected status which employment brings, simultaneously suffer a loss of dignity. Furthermore, forced retirement engenders a traumatic reaction because retirement is contradictory to the work ethic upon which these people have been raised. In 1979, a Harris Poll of retired persons revealed that 4690 of those interviewed would prefer to be working. A more startling statistic cited by Dr. Kenneth Pelletier, an Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the University of California at San Francisco is that there is an 80% increase in mortality at the time of mandatory retirement.

The Financial Effects

Finally, age discrimination in employment takes from an individual a significant share of his income, and thus, in many cases, his ability to remain independent and maintain a decent standard of living. The retiree does not have adequate income to live decently, and is not allowed to work to earn such income.

The Economic Benefits of Abolishing Age Discrimination in Employment

The elimination of age discrimination in employment also makes economic sense. Those who work past normal retirement age will, of course, be paid for that work, and benefit accordingly. At the same time, private employers will pay out less in retirement benefits once mandatory retirement is eliminated. The abolition of mandatory retirement will not interfere with the provisions of the Employment Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA). Thus, an employer will not be required to credit, for purposes of benefit accrual, those years of service which occur after an employee's normal retirement age. Added years of service, therefore, will not increase the ultimate retirement benefit or the cost of providing it. On the other hand, the longer an employee works, the shorter the period retirement payments will have to be made, thus lowering the funding assumptions of the plan and saving money for the employer. Certain plans, such as those which provide for the accrual of benefits after normal retirement age, will not experience such savings. However, there will be no significant cost increase to these plans. Any increases in benefits would generally be offset by factors such as the shorter life expectancy of employees upon retirement after normal retirement age, interest earned on plan assets during the period between normal retirement age and the age at which employees actually retire, and increases in pre-retirement mortality.

Elimination of age discrimination in employment will also help to alleviate the problems resulting from an increasing number of retirees depending upon the economic productivity of younger workers. Since the retiree population is growing in numbers, its dependency will only increase and cause a greater economic drain on the working population unless the elderly employee is permitted to continue working.

The Reduction of State Expenditures

The abolition of age discrimination in employment will also reduce state expenditures. Age discrimination often brings with it a drastic loss of personal income. This loss of income results in increased dependency among the elderly upon such programs as SSI, Medicaid, and Emergency Assistance. As the retired elderly population grows, the economic drain upon the worker force which must support that population increases. Those who continue to work past retirement age thus serve to alleviate this growing burden of expenditures.

The Productivity of Older Workers

One economic argument sometimes made in favor of mandatory retirement is that older workers are not as productive as younger workers. Studies have proven that opposite to be true. Older workers have better attendance records, are more prompt, have fewer accidents, and take greater pride in their work. Other studies have demonstrated that younger workers leave their jobs more frequently than older workers, requiring the employer to spend money to re-train new replacements to develop skills elderly workers already possess. The American Medical Association has presented evidence in federal court that there is no data indicating that older workers are less productive.

Employers will not suffer a loss of productivity because of the decision of some of its older workers to remain on the job. On the contrary, the employer should gain from the experience of the older worker. Moreover, there is absolutely nothing in the law which prevent an employer from terminating any older worker who cannot satisfactorily perform his job.

Limited Impact

Experience in the private and public sector indicate that the impact caused by the elimination of mandatory retirement will be limited. Approximately seven out of ten americans currently retire before reaching the age of 65. The impact upon the individual lives of those who wish to keep on working is, of course, enormous. But evidence indicates that attractive retirement benefits are, on the whole, encouraging earlier average retirements despite laws which allow those so inclined to work longer. For example, General Electric in Connecticut reports that out of 300,000 employees, only 450 have opted to work past age 65. It is, therefore, extremely unlikely that the elimination of mandatory retirement will bring marked changes in the make-up of the work force, particularly since the Federal law prohibits mandatory retirement before 70.

The Need for Exceptions

The bill creates an exception to the general rule abolishing mandatory retirement. This exception allows an employer to require the retirement of an individual because of his age if age is a bona fide occupational qualification reasonably necessary to the operation of a particular business. This exception is directed at certain occupations such as airline pilot, bus driver, etc. In cases such as these, where safety is a paramount concern, and where convincing evidence can be established that necessary skills deteriorate with age, and that individual testing for deteriorating skills is impractical, an employer may continue to set a defensible mandatory retirement age for its employees. This exception appears in the federal law as well, and is uniformly viewed as a needed but narrowly defined exception to insure public safety.

Concerns of Private Industry

One of the major problems that private industry has with abolishing mandatory retirement is that passage of this legislation will make it even more difficult for New York State to compete for the corporate population. However, evidence illustrates that in reality, this is not a factor at all. Connecticut abolished mandatory retirement for the private sector in 1978, with the exception of positions where age is a bona fide occupational qualification, high paid executives who receive pension of \$27,000 or more, or university professors. At the same time, Connecticut has increased its corporate population, at the expense of New York State. Since 1978, such large corporations as Kennecott Cooper, Continental Group, Rayonier Inc., Tetley Inc., and Union Carbide have relocated their headquarters in Connecticut.

Furthermore, many corporations have voluntarily abolished mandatory retirement and are very pleased with the results. U.S. Steel, Polaroid, Bankers Life and Casualty, Pepsico, R.H. Macy's and Tertl Inc., are a few such corporations. Bankers Life and Casualty conducted a study entitled "Bankers' Experience With Over-65 Workers". They found that "the presence of the elderly tends to enhance morale rather than hinder it, perfect attendance records were found more than twice as often among workers aged 65 and up than among younger workers, older workers were more careful and suffered fewer accidents than younger workers and because they enjoyed working, they were pleasant to work with.

Another concern of industry is that it would be extremely difficult to terminate an employee from his job without mandatory retirement. Bankers Life and Casualty has not had a problem in this area, either. Their philosophy is that when an older employee can no longer handle their present position, the company considers them far more appropriate, less demanding positions. Each situation is handled on an individual basis, and only as a last resort rarely occurs. At such times when no appropriate placement seems available, the older employee is usually the first to broach the subject of retirement.

One last argument that private industry has used to oppose the abolition of age discrimination in employment is that an increase in the company's insurance and pension plans would occur. Again, Bankers has not found this to be true. Once a worker becomes 65 years old, they are entitled to Medicare benefits, which reduce the amount of health coverage the company must provide. Furthermore, the longer an employee remains on the job, the longer the company delays paying pension benefits.

Conclusion

Age discrimination in employment is a concept whose time has clearly passed. This State can no longer condone a practice which removes older workers from their jobs simply because of their age. Such discrimination on the basis of age is no less unfair than discrimination based on racial or sexual grounds. Older workers, as other workers, must be judged on their ability or inability to perform their job. Additionally, this practice inflicts unwarranted psychological and financial damage upon its victims. Nor can its continued practice be justified on economic grounds.

Both New York and the Federal government, over the past twenty years, have been heading toward the abolition of all age discrimination in incremental steps. It is well beyond the time that New York should take the final, necessary step, and bring an end to age discrimination in employment.

PRIOR LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

- 1980: A.7197-B (Fortune) - passed Assembly; Died in Senate.
- 1979: A.7197 (Fortune) - passed Assembly; Died in Senate.
- 1978: A.1321-A (Fortune) - Died in Ways and Means.
- 1977: A.1321-A (Fortune) - passed Assembly; Died in Senate.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS FOR STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

The effect upon the systems of the State and its political subdivisions of removing a mandatory retirement age is to increase costs due to the accumulation of service credit and a higher average salary, and to reduce costs due to the shorter pay-out time and delayed start of payments. Actual fiscal implications will be dependent upon the mortality and salary experience of members of the public retirement system affected by this legislation.

EFFECTIVE DATE:

January 1, 1982.



AGE DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT

A.100 - Fortune, Fink, et al.
S.3800 - Markowitz, Ohrenstein, et al.

Supporting Background Information

- A. Population
- B. Limited Utilization of the Opportunity to Continue Working
- C. Effects on Business
- D. Effects on Government
- E. Effects on Younger Workers
- F. Job Performance of Older Workers
- G. Physical and Psychological Effects of Mandatory Retirement
- H. Income of Elderly

A. POPULATION

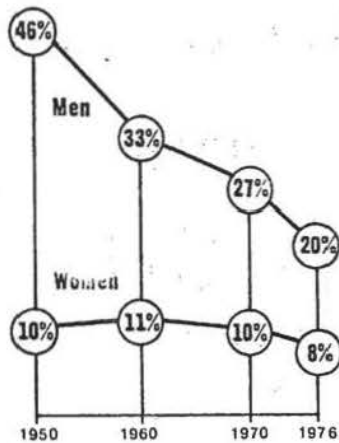
1. Current New York State 65+ population: 2.1 million or nearly 12% of entire population.
2. New York State population increase for period 1930-1970:
 - 65+ group - 194%
 - general population - 45% increase
3. By 2000 A.D., 20% of U.S. population will be 65+, 20% will be under 15 years of age - 60% of population will have to support this 40%. (Time: 6/5/75)
4. 1935: 9-10 adults in labor force for every person over 65
1978: 3 adults in labor force for every one person over 65
early 1980's: 2.5 adults in labor force for every one person over 65
(Wallfesh, Henry M., "The Effects of Extending the Mandatory Retirement Age: 1978. A Management Briefing for American Management Associations.)
5. Worker/Retiree Ratios:
 - 1965 - 4 workers to every one retiree
 - 1977 - 3.2 workers to every one retiree
 - 2000 - 2 workers to every one retiree

B. LIMITED UTILIZATION OF THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONTINUE WORKING

1. Johnson & Higgins 1980 survey of Fortune-500 companies reveals that actual retirement age, on average, was a low 61.8 years. (J & H is world's largest insurance brokerage firm - see Appendix A for a list of responding companies)
2. 63.4% of eligible employees retired before normal retirement age (NRA); 28.8% retired at NRA; only 7.4% deferred retirement, many simply to satisfy technical pension requirements. (Johnson & Higgins - 1980)
3. "A study by the U.S. Dept. of Labor sees that extension of the working age from 65 to 70 as affecting 200,000 workers [nationwide] who opt to stay in the labor market." (Wallfesh: 1978)
4. "No more than half the work force (perhaps as little as 30%) is actually employed by companies with a mandatory retirement policy." (Wallfesh: 1978)
5. "Only 2.7 million (nationwide), or 12 per cent of those over 65, are now employed and many of these are engaged in only part-time activities. In 1950, of those over 65, twenty-four per cent were working. On a percentage basis, that amounts to double the present figure." (Wallfesh: 1978)
6. Percent of Labor Force Over 65 Years:
 - 1900: 36%
 - 1950: 25%
 - 1974: 14% (Geriatrics: May 1976)

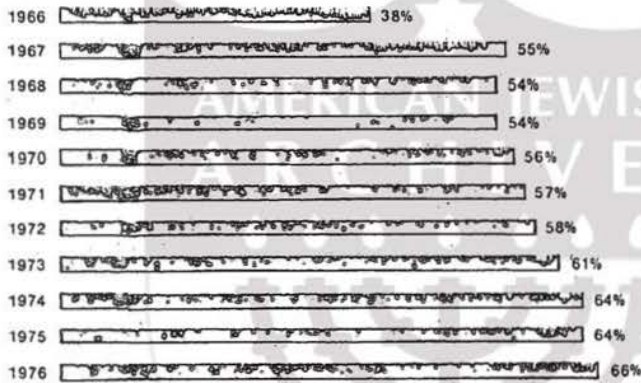
OVER

7. Share of men and women age 65 and over who hold or are seeking jobs.



(U.S. Dept. of Labor)

8. Share of workers retiring before 65 under Social Security.



(U.S. Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare)

Company	Percentage Retiring Before Mandatory Age of 65
Ford Motor Company	98% hourly wage employees 89% all employees
Exxon Corporation	80%
General Foods	70%
IBM	84%

(Testimony before the Senate Select Committee on Aging: 1979)

10. 40% of working family heads from ages 35 to 63 plan to retire before age 65; one out of four of those 35-59 years of age plan to retire before age 62. (Study conducted by Survey Research Center, University of Michigan: 1976)
11. Actual experience reveals that only 2.6% of those eligible to retire remain past age 65, although 70 years is the present mandatory retirement age. (N.Y.S. Employee Retirement System)
12. Connecticut General Life Insurance Company recently abolished mandatory retirement for most employees. "In its first year of operation, there were 52 such employees [at retirement age], and of that group only two of them decided to stay." (Wallfesh: 1978)
13. Only 1/3 of U.S. labor force works under some form of mandatory retirement policies. (Louis Harris Poll: 1975)
14. At least 1/2 of those with pensions retire before mandatory age. (Bankers Trust Pension Study)

C. EFFECTS ON BUSINESS

1. "The bottom line, amid all this fuss [about benefits costs], however is best summarized by one sanguine corporate officer who wrote, 'We expect any costs [which result from ADEA compliance] to be insignificant in relation to total benefits costs.'" (Johnson & Higgins: 1980)
2. Employer health benefits costs were reduced at age 65 because of Medicare-provided benefits. (Johnson and Higgins: 1] 980)
3. A mandatory retirement age of 70 would reduce, rather than increase, costs for most pension plans. (Mr. Donald Elisburg, Assistant U.S. Secretary of Labor)
4. The 1980 nationwide evaluation of business environments, conducted by Alexander Grant and Co., revealed that mandatory retirement laws were not among the 18 factors considered most significant to manufacturers' evaluations of business climates among the states; and, when asked, Grant was doubtful if M.R. would be included as significant in an additional group of 18 factors. (Consulting study by Alexander Grant and Co., Chicago, for Conference of State Manufacturers Assoc.)
5. Bankers Life Aid Casualty reports that there is no increase in their insurance and pension costs without mandatory retirement because Medicare supplements health insurance at 65 and the longer an employee remains on the job, the longer the company delays paying pension benefits.
6. Corporations that have voluntarily abolished mandatory retirement: U.S. Steel, Polaroid, Bankers Life and Casualty, Pepsico, R.H. Macy's and Tertle, Inc., Republic Steel, Bethlehem Steel, Inland and Wheeling Pittsburgh.
7. There is no truth to the assertion that the abolition of mandatory retirement will drive businesses from New York State. Connecticut abolished mandatory retirement in 1978; since then, such large corporations as Kennecott Cooper, Continental Group, Rayonier, Inc., Tetley, Inc., and Union Carbide have moved their headquarters there from NYS.
8. 39 of 100 large companies surveyed have no mandatory retirement age. (Charles D. Spencer and Associates, Inc.; 1979 Chicago Survey of 100 major U.S. employers - Appendix B.)
9. A total of 32,372 persons retired from the 100 companies surveyed. Of these:
 - 16% (5,200) disability pensions
 - 62% (20,192) younger than 65
 - 19% (6,261) age 65
 - only 2% (719) older than 65 (Spencer and Assoc.)
10. Survey of 300 companies revealed that over 75% were not very concerned about the elimination of mandatory retirement, citing as their reasons:
 - 1) only a few workers seemed interested in working past 65; and
 - 2) those who were staying on were apt to be desirable workers with satisfactory performance in the past. (EBASCO Risk Mgt. Consultants: 1/80)
11. When asked if mandatory retirement legislation would have any effect on a company's retirement benefit plans, 87% of those surveyed replied "no". (Wm. M. Mercer, Inc.; 1979)
12. "On the whole, executives do not believe changes in mandatory retirement laws have had much effect on their companies. Twenty-nine percent said that there was no effect and another 46% felt that mandatory retirement laws had little effect on their companies. 22% of the 426 companies surveyed reported that mandatory retirement laws would have "some" effect while only 3% expected that such laws would have a "major" effect. (Wm. M. Mercer, Inc.; 1979 survey of the nation's largest industrial and service corporations)
13. "There are several options available to prevent any increases in pension costs. For example, workers remaining past the normal retirement date can receive the same dollar benefit upon actual retirement that they would have received if they retired on normal retirement date. In this instance, an employer's costs may be reduced because (a) he no longer contributes to the pension on behalf of the older employee, and (b) the pension benefits do not begin until later in the employee's life."

(Marc Rosenblum, "The Next Steps in Combating Age Discrimination in Employment: With Special Reference to Mandatory Retirement Policy," Special Committee on Aging, United State Senate Working Paper: 1977)

D. EFFECTS ON GOVERNMENT

1. Loss to GNP is in excess of \$5 billion annually as a result of mandatory retirement. (James Schultz, Brandeis University)
2. Retirement brings with it a substantial loss of income, increasing dependency among the elderly upon SSI, Medicaid and Emergency Assistance.
3. "Forced retirement is leading the Social Security fund into bankruptcy." (Newsweek: 1/19/76)
4. Approximately 18 million people receive Social Security benefits at an average of \$330/month for individuals and \$563/month for couples.
5. 1973 - over 15 million persons received Social Security retirement benefits; this represented 14% more than 1970 and 28% more than 1965.

E. EFFECTS ON YOUNGER WORKERS

1. "After a period of adjustment, abolishing mandatory retirement is likely to increase the number of job openings." (L.A. Shaver, Vice President of A.M. Levin and Associates, a Chicago-based consulting firm)
2. "Gerald Maguire, vice president of corporate services [for Bankers Life and Casualty], states that company growth, organizational structure changes, job posting programs, employee counseling programs, and training programs have all worked to assure that paths of achievement [for younger workers] are not blocked by older workers. Moreover, personnel records show that the company has not grown top-heavy with older workers." (Wallfesh)

3. The Bankers Life and Casualty experience: Percentage of employees by age in selected years:

	<u>Over 50</u>	<u>Over 55</u>	<u>Over 60</u>	<u>65 and Over</u>
1954	24	15	8	Unknown
1968	27	16	7	3
1977	25	17	8	4

4. "Of every 100 people in the labor force who reach 65, 80 or so are blue-collar workers with a high school education or less. Of every 100 young people entering the labor force, at least 50 have had advanced education and are simply not available for the traditional jobs in manufacturing, mining, in transportation, or in service industries. Except perhaps in the event of a truly catastrophic depression, labor supply for the traditional blue-collar jobs will increasingly be inadequate even if present blue-collar workers are willing to stay on the job beyond age 65. (Peter F. Drucker, "The Wall Street Journal", September 15, 1977)

F. JOB PERFORMANCE AND PRODUCTIVITY OF OLDER WORKERS

1. American Medical Association has presented evidence in federal court that there is no data indicating that older workers are less productive.
2. Study of 17,800 workers reveals that younger workers have a higher rate of absenteeism than older workers, and absenteeism costs an employer between \$200 - \$600 annually per employee. (N.Y.S. Dept. of Labor)
3. 75% of N.Y.S. firms surveyed stated that older workers are as productive or more productive than younger workers. (N.Y.S. Dept. of Labor)
4. Elderly are more "accurate" in their work. (Institute of Industrial Relations and National Assoc. of Manufacturers in testimony to U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Labor, 1967)
5. 1972 study of N.Y.S. agency workers revealed that these employees have better attendance records and fewer accidents than younger workers; they are also as productive as, and in some cases more productive than, younger workers. (N.Y.S. Division of Human Rights)
6. 70% of those companies justifying mandatory retirement policies on the contention that older workers cannot meet the physical requirements of the job do so without prior study or investigation. (U.S. Secretary of Labor)

G. PHYSICAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS

1. "At a certain chronological age—most often 65—forces outside of medicine inflict a disease or disability-producing condition upon working men and women that is no less devastating than cancer, tuberculosis, or heart disease. Compulsory retirement robs those affected of the will to live full, well-rounded lives, deprives them of opportunities for compelling physical and mental activity and encourages atrophy and decay. Compulsory retirement on the basis of age will impair the health of many individuals whose job represents a major source of status, creative satisfaction, social relationships, or self-respect. It will be equally disastrous for the individual who works only because he has to, and who has a minimum of meaningful goals or interests in life, job-related or otherwise. Job separation may well deprive such a person of his only source of identification and leave him floundering in a motivational vacuum with no frame of reference whatsoever.

"There is ample clinical evidence that physical and emotional problems can be precipitated or exacerbated by denial of employment opportunities. Few physicians deny that a direct relationship exists between enforced idleness and poor health." (American Medical Association, Committee on Aging, "Retirement - A Medical Philosophy and Approach", pp. 1-3)

2. Dr. Robert Butler, in his Pulitzer Prize winning book Why Survive?, labels the detrimental physical and psychological effects of mandatory retirement as the "retirement syndrome", which he states is characterized by anxiety and depression. Dr. Butler explains that otherwise healthy individuals "develop headaches, gastrointestinal symptoms, oversleeping, irritability, nervousness, and lethargy in connection with retirement." (Butler, Robert N., M.D., Why Survive? Being Old in America; New York, Harper and Row, 1975; p. 72.)
3. Mortality rate of workers who were in good health when mandatorily retired at age 65 was 30% higher than expected in the third and fourth post-retirement years. (Susan Haynes, Ph.D., Unpublished Research Findings; National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute)

H. INCOME OF ELDERLY

1. Retirement causes an immediate loss of income in excess of 50%. (NYS Office for Aging)
2. 1/2 of retired population at the poverty level. (U.S. Dept. of Labor)
3. "It makes no sense to encourage or force people to retire at 65 or earlier. It makes even less sense in the case of women. Statistically speaking, a 70-year-old woman is further from death than her 67-year-old brother. Her hand is steadier, her brain is clearer. And, actuaries warn us, she faces more years of dependency before she dies." (Paul A. Samuelson, winner of Nobel Peace Prize for Economics; Newsweek, March 30, 1981)

Appendix A (See B. 1., 2., C. 1., 2.)

Fortune - 500 Companies Participating in Johnson and Higgins Survey (1980)

AMAX	Eli Lilly
ARA Services	Lone Star Industries
Allied Chemical	Marine Midland
Airco	Martin Marietta
Air Products & Chemicals	May Department Stores
Alexander & Baldwin	McGraw-Hill
Aluminum Co. of America	Mobil Oil
American Broadcasting Co.	Mohasco
American Tobacco	Nabisco
Armco	Niagara Mohawk Power
Bell & Howell	Northrop
Bendix	Owens-Corning Fiberglas
Boise Cascade	Owens-Illinois
Borg Warner	Pacific Resources
Brunswick	Phillips Petroleum
Chesebrough-Pond's	RCA
Columbia Gas System	Shering-Plough
Consolidated Freightways	Security Pacific
Dayton Hudson	Shell Oil
Detroit Hudson	Shell Oil
Detroit Edison	Sherwin Williams
Dresser Industries	Signode
Duke Power	A.O. Smith
E.I. DuPont de Nemours	Southern Company
Duquesne Light	Springs Mills
Eastern Air Lines	Standard Oil (Indiana)
Economics Laboratory	Standard Oil (Ohio)
El Paso Natural Gas	Stauffer Chemical
Emhart	Tesoro Petroleum
Envirotech	Timken
Exxon	Trane
Florida Power & Light	Transco
Fruehauf	Union Carbide
General Foods	United States Gypsum
Gillette	U.S. Industries
Gulf Oil	United Telecommunications
Hershey Foods	Wachovia Bank
Irving Trust	Western Electric
Jim Walter	Westinghouse Electric
Johns-Manville	Weyerhaeuser
K Mart	Xerox
Kerr-McGee	Zenith
Land O'Lakes	Not identified
Leaseway Transportation	

Appendix B (See C. 8., 9.)

Companies Participating in Spencer and Assoc. Survey (9/79)
(* located in New York State)

AMF Incorporated, White Plains, N.Y.*
Allen-Bradley Co., Milwaukee, WI
Apache Corporation, Minneapolis, MN
Archer Daniels Midland, Decatur, IL
Babcock & Wilcox, New Orleans, LA
Ball Corporation, Muncie, IN
Bausch & Lomb, Rochester, NY*
The Bendix Corp., Southfield, MI
Bethlehem Steel Corp., Bethlehem, PA
Black & Decker (U.S.), Inc., Towson, MD
Boeing Company, Seattle, WA
Boise Cascade Corp. Boise, ID
Borden, Inc., Columbus, OH
Bradford National Corp., New York, NY*
Brunswick Corporation, Skokie, IL
Bucyrus-Erie Company, South Milwaukee, WI
Cargill, Inc., Minneapolis, MN
Chicago Tribune, Chicago, IL
Chrysler Corp., Detroit, MI
Cities Service Co., Tulsa, OK
The Columbia Gas System, Inc., Wilmington, DE
ConAgra, Inc., Omaha, NE
Consolidated Natural Gas Co., Pittsburgh, PA
Consolidated Rail Corp., Philadelphia, PA
Consumers Glass Company, Limited, Etobicoke,
Ontario, Canada
E.H. Crump Cos., Inc., Memphis, TN
Cummins Engine Company, Inc., Columbia, IN
Cutler-Hammer, Milwaukee, WI
Detroit Edison, Detroit, MI
The Dow Chemical Company, Midland, MI
Eastern Airlines, Miami, FL
Eastman Kodak Company, Rochester, NY*
The El Paso Company, El Paso, TX
Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., Chicago, IL
Fingerhut Corporation, Minnetonka, MN
The Firestone Tire & Rubber Co., Akron, OH
Florida Power & Light Company, Miami, FL
Forest Oil Corporation, Bradford, PA
L.B. Foster Company, Pittsburgh, PA
General Tel. Co. of the N.W., Inc., Everett, WA
Genesco, Inc., Nashville, TN
Grand Central, Inc., Salt Lake City, UT
Hallmark Cards, Inc., Kansas City, MO
Hanes Corporation, Winston-Salem, NC
Hercules Incorporated, Wilmington, DE
Hillenbrand Industries, Batesville, IN
Hilton Hotels Corporation, Beverly Hills, CA
Hobart Corporation, Troy, OH
Honeywell, Inc., Minneapolis, MN
Idaho Power Company, Boise, ID
Ideal Industries, Inc., Sycamore, IL
International Paper Co., New York, NY*
Jones & Laughlin Steel Corp., Pittsburgh, PA
Kerr-McGee Corp., Oklahoma City, OK
Kraft, Inc., Glenville, IL
The Lubrizol Corporation, Wickliffe, OH
Magnovox Consumer Electronics Co., Fort Wayne,
IN
The Mead Corporation, Dayton, OH
Michigan Bell Telephone Company, Detroit, MI
Mobay Chemical Corporation, Pittsburgh, PA
Montana Dakota Utilities, Co., Bismarck, ND
The Montana Power Co., Butte, MT
Motorola, Inc., Schaumburg, IL
New York City Transit Authority, Brooklyn, NY*
Newsday, Inc., Garden City, NY*
Northern Telecom Systems Corp., Minneapolis,
MN
Occidental Petroleum Corporation, Los Angeles,
CA
PACCAR, Inc., Bellevue, WA
Pacific Power & Light Co., Portland, OR
Pennwalt Corporation, Philadelphia, PA
Peoples Gas Company, Chicago, IL
Ponderosa System, Inc., Dayton, OH
The Quaker Oats Company, Chicago, IL
Ralston Purina Company, St. Louis, MO
Republic Steel Corporation, Cleveland, OH
Reynolds Electric & Engineering Co., Las Vegas,
NY*
The Richardson Company, Des Plaines, IL
Ryan Homes, Inc., Pittsburgh, PA
SPS Technologies, Jenkintown, PA
Sandia Laboratories, Albuquerque, NM
SCOA Industries, Inc., Columbus, OH
Shakespeare Company, Columbia, SC
Simmonds Precision Products, Inc., Tarrytown,
NY*
A.O. Smith Corporation, Milwaukee, WI
Super Valu Stores, Inc., Hopkins, MN
Systron-Donner Corporation, Concord, CA
The Trane Company, LaCross, WI
Twin Disc Incorporated, Racine, WI
United States Borax & Chemical Corporation, Los
Angeles, CA
United Telephone Company of Ohio, Mansfield,
OH
Vapor Corporation, Chicago, IL
Virginia Electric and Power Company, Richmond,
VA
Washington Gas Light Company, Washington, DC
The Washington Gas Light Company, Spokane, WA
The Western Company of North America, Fort
Worth, TX
Roy F. Weston, Inc., West Chester, PA
Weyerhaeuser Company, Tacoma, WA
Whittaker Corporation, Los Angeles, CA
Wisconsin Electric Power Company, Milwaukee,
WI
Wisconsin Gas Company, Milwaukee, WI

Companies with no Mandatory Retirement Age
(Spencer and Assoc. 1979)

	<u># Employees</u>
Allen Bradley Co.	---
Apache Corp.	---
Bethlehem Corp.	---
Bethlehem Steel	---
Boeing	---
Bradford National Corporation	---
Con Agra	6,000
Consolidated Rail	---
Consumers Glass	---
Fingerhut Corp.	400
Grand Central, Inc.	2,000
Hilton Hotels	22,000
Jones and Laughlin Steel	27,000
Northern Telecom	5,000
Occidental Petroleum	3,800
PACCAR, Inc.	10,000
Pacific Power and Light	4,800
Ponderosa System	18,000
Republic Steel	46,000
Ryan Homes	1,600
Super Value Stoves	10,000
Systron-Donner Corp.	1,700
Vapor Corp.	1,800
Washington Water	---
Roy F. Weston, Inc.	400
Weyerhaeuser	45,000
Whittaker	6,000





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ALBANY

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MENTAL HEALTH
REAL PROPERTY TAXATION
WAYS & MEANS

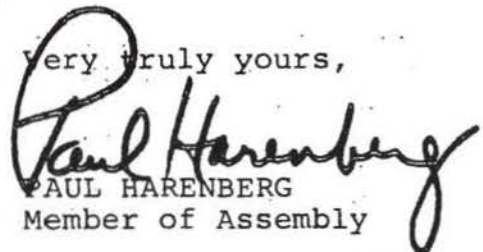
Dear Delegate,

As the day for the New York State Conference on Aging is rapidly approaching, I would like to send my sincere congratulations to you as a delegate, and to extend my heartfelt welcome to Albany.

You will be faced with making many decisions during the Conference days which will affect Senior Citizens throughout the State for the coming year and the next decade. This is an awesome responsibility. That is why I am extremely pleased that you have been chosen to represent the Seniors in your region. I will endeavor to work with you and the other delegates to achieve our ultimate goal: an improved quality of life for our elderly population.

Since I am a delegate, I will share many of the workshops you will be attending and we will have a chance to exchange our views. However, it would give me great pleasure to meet with you personally while you are in Albany to discuss any important issue you would like me to address as Chairman of the Assembly Committee on Aging. Please contact my office, at (518) 455-5937, if you would like to make an appointment.

Very truly yours,


PAUL HARENBERG
Member of Assembly

PH/1a



HIGHLIGHTS

OPERATION IDENTIFY-A-WHCOA-
DELEGATE UNDERWAY + OTHER NICA
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"HER HOUSE IS TIME TESTED,"
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"WE WALK NOT BY SIGHT..."

1981 has not been called the "Year of the Older American" but with the rise in numbers of older adults shown by the 1980 census, the 1981 White House Conference on Aging, the inauguration of a 70 year old President, May as Senior Citizens' month and the activities in preparation for both the 1981 WHCOA and the planned 1982 U. N. World Congress on Aging, such designation would be appropriate.

In the meantime, proposed budget cuts for social services and administrative freezes and cut backs on present programs, coupled with the current economic situation, make bad news for older adults. Too, NICA's fiscal future is yet to be secured. NICA now receives no federal grant support and faces real fiscal problems. If we could see NICA's bank balance for a year from now how would we feel? But, pessimism is not characteristic of the community of faith.

The Prophet Habakkuk saw through even worse times with eyes and lips of faith:

"Though the fig tree do not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation, God, the Lord is my strength. - -"
(Hab. 3:17-19, RSV)

The Apostle Paul tells us that "---God can give you everything you need, so that you may always have sufficient for yourselves and for giving away to other people." (2 Cor. 9:8, RSV) You and I do have enough money to do everything God expects or requires us to do with it. " - - - the gift is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what one does not have." (2 Cor. 8:12) Giving primarily involves a decision about whether to give, how much, to what cause or to whom. Hopefully, you and others will recognize the worthiness of NICA's work and choose to give to it generously as among those opportunities God places before us all.

Tom Cook, Jr., Executive Director

NICA News

10 th ANNUAL MEETING - APRIL 21-22, 1981, MILWAUKEE, WI

The focus will be on planning for the next two years. Theme: "1970's: Mission Accomplished!/1980's: Mission and Means?" The opening luncheon will feature the first of a proposed continuing Annual Spiritual Well-being Award given to the individual judged as having contributed significantly to advance the Spiritual Well-being of older Americans. The NICA Board of Directors will hold its spring meeting in conjunction with the Annual Meeting.

NEW NICA MEMBER AGENCIES

NICA welcomes to its voting member ranks the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America and its representative, Fr. Emmanuel Vasilakis; The Church of the Nazarine, Division of Senior Adult Ministries and its representative, Rev. Melvin Shrout. The United Presbyterian Church in the USA is again a full member through affiliation with the Presbyterian Church, U.S. in the joint Presbyterian Office of Aging represented by Dr. Thomas Robb.

In the reciprocal member category we welcome the Interfaith Council for Family Financial Planning, represented by Dr. Edward R. Savage; and the National Senior Citizens Law Center, represented by Burton D. Fretz, Executive Director, and Ms. Barbara Skolnick of the Washington, DC staff.

NASHVILLE, NCOA AND NICA

NICA was well represented by Board, Staff and individual members during the March 29 - April 1 NCOA gathering. Religious sector concerns were voiced in numerous sections but notably in the NVOILA (National Voluntary Organizations for Independent Living for the Aging) Executive Committee and 10th Anniversary Luncheon, and in a special Panel presentation on "Wholistic Well-being of the Elderly: Current Trends and Implications," chaired by Tom Cook, Jr., with presentations by NICA President, Lt. Col. Mary E. Verner, Mrs. Victorina Peralta, Rev. Stanley Michael, and Dr. Horace Kerr. A "Mini-White House Conference Chats" session featured the NICA convened National Symposium on Spiritual and Ethical Value System Concerns in the 1981 WHCOA.

WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON AGING INTERFAITH EVENT

Sunday, November 29, 1981 is designated by the White House Conference on Aging for an interfaith event to open the conference with a service of worship at the National Cathedral in Washington and concurrent nationwide observance and celebration of the dignity and worth of older Americans through the ringing of bells and special services in local congregations across the land. NICA has been asked to assist in this latter effort. Dr. Arthur S. Flemming will coordinate the overall event. NICA calls upon our nation's churches and synagogues to set aside November 29, 1981 for a special day of worship in gratitude for the meaning and purpose of aging and the older persons in our nation. The month of May should also be used by religious bodies to raise awareness of the value, place, and needs of older Americans and to prepare for the November observance.

OPERATION IDENTIFY-A-WHCOA-DELEGATE

OPERATION IDENTIFY-A-WHCOA-DELEGATE is now underway. NICA urges all members to give the office the names and addresses and any other information regarding delegates and/or observers appointed to the 1981 White House Conference on Aging who are concerned with the work of NICA or its related Spiritual Well-being interests. We will compile a list and seek to assist those delegates in searching out the issues and concerns of key importance to the religious community. Several Board Members have been appointed as delegates. Their names and others will be highlighted in a subsequent issue of NICA INFORM. Please help us in this effort.

Cont. on p.4