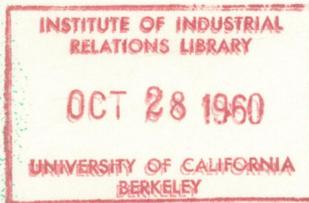


Older workers - Employment policies ✓  
(1957-60 full)

Report on

# EMPLOYMENT OF MATURE WORKERS



***"Our nation now must learn  
to take advantage of the full potential  
of our older citizens – their skills, their wisdom  
and their experience. We need these traits fully as much  
as we need the energy and boldness of youth."***

**DWIGHT DAVID EISENHOWER**

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
OF MANUFACTURERS**

Industrial relations division.

☐ New York, 1960 ☐

OFFICIAL NAM POLICY ON  
EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES FOR OLDER WORKERS

“Older workers represent countless years of rich and seasoned experience, judgment and stability, and constitute an immensely valuable asset in the nation’s work force.

“Employers are urged to observe voluntary hiring practices which give consideration to skills and abilities rather than to any arbitrary age factor.”

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS DIVISION

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MANUFACTURERS  
2 East 48th Street, New York 17, N. Y.

September, 1960

*Price \$1.00*

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## PREFATORY NOTE

This study, based on manufacturing industry's experience in opening its doors to ever-increasing numbers of older workers, provides an insight into the nature of the problems confronting employers and the marked progress industry has made in utilizing the skills of mature applicants.

By raising some vital questions which affect continuing progress on the subject and setting forth a constructive attitude and philosophy, it is hoped that employers will find this report helpful in making still further use of the many and varied talents, experience and judgment which older workers have to contribute.

Although NAM membership is composed of companies of all types and sizes throughout the country, most of these 20,000 member companies are small. (Over one-quarter of them employ less than 50 people; almost half employ fewer than 100; five out of six NAM member companies have fewer than 500 employees on the payroll). NAM's thinking and recommendations, therefore, give particular weight to considerations affecting the smaller company.

The problem of providing employment opportunities for mature workers is here discussed with full awareness that conditions vary markedly between companies, between industries and between different sections of the country. The knowledge that there is no single solution to the problem is a paramount consideration.

## I. AN OPEN LETTER TO EMPLOYERS

The public is deeply concerned with the “plight” of the over-45 job seeker because of a widespread impression that the doors of employment are closed to him.

Despite many employers’ insistence that age is not a barrier to employment, the cry is raised that this is not so, that old prejudices are merely going underground and workers are being rejected in more subtle ways.

Whether justified or not, this problem is being laid at the employer’s door. The employer who turns down any older applicant, even for good and sufficient reason, is labeled as “short-sighted, prejudiced, behind-the-times, and working against his own best interests.”

Politicians are quick to espouse the cause of the older person. Realistically, they see the vote potential of this ever-enlarging group. Special committees appointed by mayors and governors, spokesmen for medical, social agency and union organizations are garnering more and more attention; and laws to bar age discrimination, in seven states now—with insistent pressures for action at the federal level—are the handwriting on the wall.

Unfortunately, legislation regulating company employment practices is widely viewed as a solution: “Let’s make employers hire older people” sounds like an easy remedy and few stop to consider the futility and the danger of this over-simplification.

There are some who see the solution in terms of collective bargaining agreements. Already, there have been demands to require employers to hire a certain number of workers over 45 years old for every given number of new employees they take on and to maintain that ratio.

Unions have also sought provisions requiring employers when hiring in any plant, to give preference by seniority to workers laid off from the company’s other plants and from other companies in the area and industry. This is just one of many proposals being eyed by the union organizer to woo the potential member.

As middle-aged dues payers begin to increase in unions, we can expect demands designed to “strengthen” job opportunities for older employees who have been laid off and cannot find work.

The mature worker, with his valuable storehouse of experience and skill, is the very backbone of industry, and wise employers—knowing they need these men and women—have adopted clear policies to make sure that the best-qualified person is hired regardless of age. But any possible gaps between company policy and hiring practice need to be scrutinized.

In the labor-short economy that lies ahead—as we strive to meet the needs of an expanding population and our defense establishment—there is every indication that in order to man its machines and its processes, industry will have to hire more and more people in the older brackets. There just won't be enough workers in the 25-45 age group to do the job. It, therefore, makes good sense for employers to review their policies *NOW*, to examine their practices, to find out what kind of performance they may reasonably expect from older applicants and to gear up for their efficient use.

Older workers are far younger than they used to be—they are more productive because of better health, more vigorous philosophy and attitude, better education.

The increase in the life span of the average American and the resulting shift of a larger percent of the population into the upper age brackets pose questions that are of concern to everyone. Employers have a profound interest in the intelligent solution of these problems.

The question of gainful employment bulks large in this complex, and while the public needs to understand more about industry's achievements and difficulties in employing mature people, there is no substitute for performance. The myth of the employer's supposed unyielding preference for younger people as employees can be melted away only by a record of action.

## II. THE DIMENSION OF THE PROBLEM

Any attempt to evaluate the size and complexity of the problem begins with a distinction of terms. Who is the "older worker"?

1. Is he the person beyond normal retirement years who wants or needs employment?
2. Is he the middle age or older worker who is slowing down or showing signs of physical disability?
3. Is he the mature worker, too young to retire, who finds difficulty in getting a job because of age?

Although real problems are inherent in #1 and #2, this review deals only with the third category. The crux of the problem lies with the person aged 45 to 65 who is

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<sup>1</sup> Employers traditionally have attempted to take care of their own long-service employees for whom they have a high regard. Where employees can no longer meet the full requirements of the job, adjustments are usually made or the employee is transferred to suitable work. This practice is general throughout industry in the case of individuals who have spent years with the company.

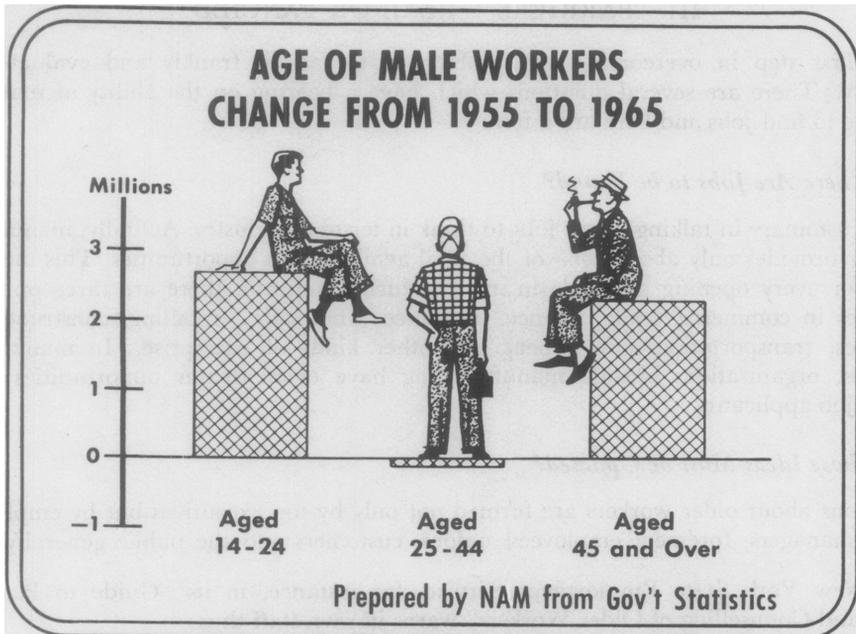
seeking new employment. This *individual* needs the opportunity to support himself and his dependents, and to protect his equity in social security and private pension alike. The *economy* needs his contribution.

The over-45 age group is the fastest growing labor group in our land. Soon every third person in America will be 45 or over. (By 1975 half of the labor force will be over 45).

Assuming progress at the same rate as in recent years, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates our Gross National Product at 560 billion dollars in 1965. To attain this level, the Bureau calculates the need for 10 million more people in the labor force than in 1955. Half of these ten million added workers must come from the over 45 group, although that group will increase only by 31% in the population (because the declining birth rate from 1930 to 1940 will mean fewer males 25-44 years old in 1965).

Putting it another way, the 45-64 year group will grow 17% by 1965; the 14-24 year group will grow by 41%, but the latter is the "school age" group.

The "prime working group" (ages 25-44) on which industry has traditionally relied for its solid core of skilled help, will not increase at all—may even decline slightly, leaving to those over-45 the major burden of producing the added output required by our larger population. Actually, for every 2 more workers in the age group usually considered the most "eligible" for employment, there will be 11 new workers among the plus-45s.



All of the above points up the fact that the middle-agers are an important reservoir of manpower for the accelerated needs of tomorrow. A deliberate effort to utilize their capabilities more fully becomes not just a social welfare issue, but a hard fact of life for industrial operation. The employer who wisely cultivates those past 45 will have a decided competitive edge over the one who suddenly finds he can get only raw young workers for jobs that take skill and training.

The need for employees changes rapidly as a result of market and technologic factors, but in light of the clear demand for skilled workers, many companies are conducting personnel inventories to determine their future labor requirements and training needs. Obviously the size and shape of management's personnel needs points to better use of men and women over 45 than heretofore and with the greater supply (now 28 million, but in 10 years, 33 million) employers will have a wider variety of applicants to choose from, some of whom may be infinitely better qualified than the less experienced, younger man or woman.

### III. BARRIERS — REAL OR FANCIED?

The first step in overcoming any problem is to face it frankly and evaluate it clearly. There are several questions which have a bearing on the ability of mature people to find jobs and here are a few:

#### A. *Where Are Jobs to be Found?*

It is customary in talking about jobs to think in terms of industry. Actually, manufacturing provides only about 25% of the total available job opportunities. This means that for every opening available in manufacturing industry, there are three opportunities in commerce, trade, finance, insurance, wholesaling, retailing, construction, services, transportation, government and other kinds of enterprise. In many instances, organizations outside manufacturing have even greater opportunities for older job applicants.

#### B. *Whose Ideas Must be Updated?*

Opinions about older workers are formed not only by top executives but by employment managers, foremen, employees, unions, customers and the public generally.

The New York State Employment Service, for instance, in its "Guide to Placement and Counselling of Older Workers" warns its own staff thus:

“All staff must exercise particular care to guard against reflecting in their actions, traditional prejudices against older workers and making generalizations about the work capacities or lack of work capacities found in older workers. . . . The necessity for overcoming any discriminatory attitudes or erroneous assumptions on which staff members may operate is of the greatest importance.”

### **C. Does the Employer Owe a Special Responsibility to Mature Job Applicants?**

No industrial establishment—no employer—has an obligation to employ any specific group of workers as such. Indeed such action would, in itself, be discriminatory. For example, any effort to fit the older group into the work force at the expense of younger people would be unrealistic.

Employment practices should be based on conservation and fullest possible utilization of existing manpower—by selecting, placing, promoting and retaining employees on the basis of qualifications for the job. Under this concept, age per se is not a barrier to getting or holding a job.

### **D. Does It Cost More to Hire Mature People?**

Fear of increased costs of employee benefits such as pensions, workmen's compensation, accident, sickness, hospitalization and surgery insurance are sometimes mentioned as roadblocks to the older person seeking employment.

In the case of *pensions*, there are two reasons given as “obstacles”:

- The cost of providing adequate pensions is higher when the new employees are older. Actually, it takes four times the contributions per year to build the same size pension fund at age 65, when you start with a person 50 years old as with one 25. Obviously the newcomer at 50 could not expect to receive as generous a pension at 65 as his associate who had given 40 years of service, as against his 15.

This is the situation which has given rise to the charge that companies will not hire older workers because they will not be on the payroll long enough to make it economical to incorporate them in the pension program.

- Rather than have dissatisfied workers who are left out of the pension program, or providing less than adequate pension rights thereby risking unfavorable public reaction, employers are said to prefer hiring young personnel.

What are the facts?

The NAM recently queried 70 leading companies asking “If you have a pension plan, does it affect your employment of those over 45?” We found that:

. . . 58% of the employers declared age was no consideration if the older worker had the qualifications needed to fill the job.

. . . 30% stipulated they could not include anyone in their pension plans who had not been employed at least 5 years (and many preferred 10 years).

. . . the balance declared they did not discriminate against newly-hired older workers but did not invite them to participate in the company's pension plan. Frequently those not eligible for a pension are provided with a separation allowance when they leave.

Actually, employers tend less and less to use the pension "excuse" for not hiring older applicants since:

1. Today older workers are drawing more benefits under Social Security (both because more of them qualify for maximum levels and because benefit levels have been raised)—thus minimizing adverse community attitudes which used to result when companies hired older people and retired them on the smaller pensions which went with their shorter years of service.
2. Private protection has grown enormously and a much higher percentage of employees than formerly have purchased retirement and endowment policies "on their own" as a supplement to Social Security.
3. Vesting privileges under many company plans give employees unqualified rights to funds accumulated under company pension plans. If they change jobs, they maintain this layer of protection.
4. Workers hired in *lower* age brackets cost more over the long haul than those hired at higher ages under the pension plan because:
  - . . . longer life expectancy for younger workers means they will draw benefits for longer periods than older ones
  - . . . benefits paid in future years are likely to increase substantially, requiring rising contributions by management
5. Where companies change retirement plans to permit employees to continue working beyond age 65, pension costs tend to be reduced.

It is becoming increasingly apparent that instead of incurring community disfavor because he has hired an older man who does not qualify for full or partial pension coverage, the employer who takes this step may be applauded as doing a distinct service—to the worker personally and to the community, as well as to himself.

Any adverse public reaction can be met squarely by a frank and clear statement of the facts to the employee at the time he is hired, and by periodic explanations to the entire work force and to the public. This view is borne out by the findings of a recent study by the Bureau of Labor Statistics:

- A group of pension experts examined the question of community reaction to retiring people with little or no pension. They concluded that many older workers will get enough Social Security upon retirement so that the management need not fear the repercussions of such situations.
- The study also points out that the employer tends to overlook future pension costs

that will be incurred for the younger worker he hires. Longer life expectancy for workers who are now young will result in retirement benefits being paid for longer periods than for the older workers he hires. Since the pension costs in future years may increase substantially, management's contributions will have to rise accordingly.

- The study concludes that selective hiring of older workers will add only a small percentage of one percent to management's total compensation costs and may not add anything at all to the final cost of retirement benefits.

There is a similar story on *insurance and other benefit plans*. A survey by Temple University on the employment of older people in Pennsylvania industries showed that:

“With respect to *insurance costs*, it can be noted that discrimination is negligible, particularly in view of the liberal attitude of manufacturing plans.

“The study pointed out that for a 50 year old employee \$3,000 of group life insurance would cost \$2.25 per month more than for a worker 30 years of age. With dividend or rate credit there was further reduction until the net difference was usually less than 1¢ per hour.”

In an analysis of 170,000 employees covered by *group insurance*, the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company found that the 45-64 age group formed 32.7% of its policyholders as compared with 31.8% of the same age group in the general work force. On this basis Charles Siegfried of that organization concluded that group life insurance plans have had no noticeable effect on the hiring of older workers, or on their continuance in employment.

As for *workmen's compensation*, rates are based on number of injuries, not age, and accident rates tend to decrease with age.

A. R. Mathieson, President, U. S. Steel and Carnegie Pension Fund stated:

“The costs of workmen's compensation insurance, accident and sickness, and hospitalization and surgery insurance are not materially increased by the inclusion of older people in the work force.”

In any consideration of possible increased costs, while it may be desirable to have a low insurance and pension rate, it is insignificant when one compares it with the costs involved in turn-over, poor or indifferent performance, absenteeism, lack of job interest and application, and the fact that the company is cutting itself off from the services of able, mature employees.

#### ***E. Is the Older Job-Seeker His Own Worst Enemy?***

In opening up more jobs for mature workers, the older worker himself plays a part. Opportunities in any labor market seldom match exactly the desires and skills of the job applicants. Therefore, obtaining a job frequently requires adjustment on the part of the applicant to changes in kind of work, wages, working conditions and job location. Ofttimes a sense of pride interferes with over-45 job seekers taking work

requiring lower skill or less salary . . . or, he is reluctant to undertake training or be trained. Ultimately, the older person can work out much of the problem for himself.

Too frequently the older job seeker is his own chief stumbling-block. Sometimes suffering from a defeatist attitude, he tends to feel he is not wanted in the labor market. Instead of accentuating his strengths and skills, he accepts the “accent on youth” idea and magnifies the imagined handicap of his age. This attitude can become, in itself, a serious handicap.

Unless he consciously guards against it, he can easily acquire a “chip on the shoulder.” No matter how he falls short in measuring up to the requirements of a job, he often feels sure he is rejected because of his age. Therefore, a determination to steer clear of this disastrous pitfall is most important to an older person looking for work.

Furthermore, once on the job, he must guard against the onset of those undesirable and unattractive personal characteristics which often creep up on him unawares—the tendency to be overbearing, stagnant, resistant to correction, inflexible, cynical or uncooperative. Once efficient and valuable long-service employees (perhaps because of the sure knowledge that they *do* know their jobs) sometimes degenerate into such “problem cases” that they find themselves pushed aside and begin to blame management for a situation that is largely of their own making.

#### ***F. Should Specific Jobs Be Set Aside for Older Workers?***

Some employers have gone so far as to design special jobs and working conditions for older workers. This may mean employing the technique of job dilution, for instance—breaking down certain jobs into less arduous subtasks, thus reducing job requirements so that specific functions may be performed by older persons.

Certain collective bargaining contracts designate that special jobs be reserved for the older person.

Some companies have set aside certain types of jobs which they feel are suitable for older persons who are no longer able to continue at their regular work—jobs such as guards, watchmen, elevator operators, maintenance, etc.

In general, however, this is not regarded as a sound approach. The older worker is not “a special case.” He wants or generally needs no quarter and will stand on his own in placement on a job commensurate with his abilities and capacities.

#### ***G. How Do Seniority and Promotion-From-Within Policies Affect the Hiring of Older Workers?***

Obviously there are realistic limits on the extent to which mature workers can be hired if a vital promotion-from-within policy is to be maintained. Older applicants can be considered only when there is no qualified available employee who can be promoted to the opening.

Furthermore, promotion-from-within policies place hiring emphasis on beginners, and

starting salaries are not generally adequate to meet the requirements of older applicants who usually have moved along in the financial scale.

In responding to a recent NAM questionnaire, companies put it this way:

. . . "Very often if he is desirable, his achievements by the time he is 45 have put him in a salary bracket difficult for us to reach because he has not attained an acceptable experience level in the industry and cannot move from another industry to ours without a period of unproductive orientation for which we cannot pay his attained salary."

. . . "Since we do follow a policy of promotion-from-within to the extent that this is possible, the job openings for the experienced person which take full advantage of his experience are limited and this often proves to be a stumbling block in the hiring of such people."

. . . "In the usual case, an individual in a higher age group has had considerable experience and is not interested in a job in lower employment levels. It is our long-standing policy to promote from within the company, and since we have devoted much time and effort toward placement, training, and in every other way to assisting our regular employees to take on better jobs, it seldom happens that there is an opening in the upper jobs which cannot be filled from within the company."

Promotion-from-within, universally regarded as sound policy, does indeed operate to the disadvantage of the older applicant. He normally will not accept a beginning job with starting salary.

#### **H. *What About Training for Promotion?***

While some older workers may be slower to embrace change, this disadvantage is balanced by their greater effort to get more out of the retraining, once the need for change is made clear. While younger workers look on each change as a stepping-stone, something temporary, the older person is more likely to buckle down and master the details.

Psychological studies have revealed that in the working world, a mature person learns differently from, but as well as, a younger one. Through experience he has cultivated the ability to select, to evaluate, to conserve, and to grasp principles.

The practice of promoting the best available man, even if his retirement is imminent, may pay off far better than moving up the one who is "second best."

#### **I. *Is the Older Applicant Ready for a New Job?***

In today's changing industrial scene there is continual emphasis on acquiring new skills. Unemployed older persons are more generally taking advantage of adult vocational and business education opportunities.

For instance, the Federation Employment and Guidance Service, through its "Operation Second Chance" provides scholarship funds for tuition-free study

grants at trade or business schools in New York City. It provides \$250 grants to accredited schools for applicants who are at least 40 years old.

. . . At Greenwich House, New York City, daytime refresher courses are available for women over 40 in shorthand, typing, bookkeeping and clerical work. An evening course in beginner typing is given.

In many instances it is important and profitable for the middle-aged to learn new skills or to improve old ones. Never before have there been available so many opportunities for the individual to equip himself for gainful employment.

### ***J. What About Absenteeism?***

The idea that older workers are absent more is pure fiction. The reverse is true, according to Secretary of Labor James P. Mitchell:<sup>2</sup>

“The older man is likely to be a family man, a home owner with community responsibilities that make his presence on the job important to him. He is more settled than his younger colleague; he has, more often than not, put his roots down and is seeking permanent employment and steady work. All of our studies showed that the older worker is less given to absenteeism than the young worker.”

Absence due to illness is actually less among the over-45s than with younger employees. It is true that when they are out, it is sometimes for a longer period, but it is much easier to plan production when a worker has to be away for a week than when one takes off an unexpected day at a time over a period of months.

One employer says:

. . . “Our greatest problem with employees over age 45 is their absence from work because of illness. This problem is somewhat offset by the fact that these older employees are less likely to change jobs.”

### ***K. How Do They Compare on Safety?***

Mature employees are less likely to take a foolish chance than the younger ones. They don't engage in horseplay and are actually more careful than younger people. Records show that they have fewer accidents.

Furthermore, workmen's compensation rates are based on the company's accident rates and the type of work being performed. Age has no bearing on such rates.

### ***L. Can the Economy Absorb the Enlarging Older Work Force?***

Opportunities for full utilization of the abilities and skills of older people depend upon an expanding economy—upon additional job opportunities. And what is it that determines the number of job opportunities that become available in the American economy? *Jobs are made by profit opportunities.* In our type of economy people are employed because other people see prospects of making a profit out of produc-

<sup>2</sup> New York Times—June 19, 1960.

tive operations involving the need for their labor. Jobs decline and unemployment results when there are not sufficient profit opportunities in our economy.

It takes capital, machines and equipment on a large scale to make workers productive. *One* job in industry today calls for an investment, on the average, of \$19,500. The willingness of the public to save and invest is a crucial factor in providing the means of improving and expanding our facilities and job opportunities. There can be no jobs without assets behind them.

The problem is how to encourage the full play of personal initiative so that ambitious people will be eager to strike out into new fields to provide more goods and services for more people.

Any move which blocks the advancement of technological progress or any of the basic factors of production, through excessive taxes or unsound fiscal policies or unreasonable interference with business, can discourage investors from taking the risks which *make for expanding jobs*.

#### ***M. What Other Factors Present Difficulties?***

The Bureau of Employment Security, U. S. Department of Labor, in discussing "problem areas which are associated with older unemployed workers", mentions these handicaps:

- Lack of job opportunities for specialized skills on unique jobs or outmoded jobs.
- Loss of speed in production operations. (This calls for a shift to new fields of work).
- Non-realistic, or too rigid, demands with respect to wages, working conditions, travel or type of firm on the part of some applicants.
- Disuse or lack of skill.
- Low morale due to unfavorable past experience or the feeling of not being wanted.
- The inexperience of many older workers in job-hunting.
- The difficulty of some older workers in adjusting to physical handicaps, particularly those experienced in later life.
- Inability to estimate one's own limitations.

Other problems include:

Adding "over-45" newcomers to a work force already employing a large percentage of older people interferes with balanced replacements.

The prejudice of fellow workers. The ages of people already in the department are a factor in building a homogenous work group. In addition an older person often finds it difficult to "take" supervision from a younger individual.

The N. Y. State Department of Labor puts it this way:

"Of course employer reluctance to hire older workers is not always based entirely upon fancy. Unquestionably, in some instances there are certain obstacles which

rationaly militate against such applicants. Often, too, some adjustments are called for in company personnel programs. The experience of employers who are hiring older applicants demonstrates beyond any doubt, however, that by using a little imagination these so-called obstacles and difficulties prove more illusory than real.”

With more and more employers recognizing that it is sound business to employ older job seekers, it is hoped that ways may be found to surmount the barriers—whether real or fancied.

#### IV. DOES THE GOVERNMENT HAVE A ROLE?

In the 86th Congress bills were introduced in the Senate to make it unlawful to bar a worker from a job on the basis of age. Similar proposals have been before Congress since July 1951 when Jacob Javits, then a member (Rep.) of the House from New York, first came up with the idea of a National Act Against Age Discrimination in Employment which he has repeatedly introduced.

Administration of his proposed statute to make age discrimination unlawful would be placed in the hands of the Wage and Hour Administrator, and would make it unlawful to refuse to hire, to discharge, or otherwise discriminate against any individual because of his age. “Age” is not defined, but when Sen. Javits introduced the bill it was indicated that the aim was to protect those in the 45-65 bracket. Enforcement would involve issuance of “cease and desist” orders along with hiring or reinstatement of the worker with lost pay.

Another approach is to deny government contracts to firms which bar jobs to the over-45s. In June 1960 Senators McNamara, Randolph and Clark introduced a bill to outlaw job discrimination for reasons of age where employers hold federal contracts.

A third method under consideration would be to amend Section 8(a) of the National Labor Relations Act to outlaw age discrimination in employment and in April 1960 Congressman Dingell (Dem., Mich.) introduced just such a proposal.

An enlarging group of legislators with their eye on the political potential of older voters are thinking of climbing on the bandwagon.

No realist believes that a law can solve the problem of the mature worker who finds himself in the job market, but there is a feeling in some quarters that the law exerts a moral suasion.

Legislative pressure is slowly building up. Five years ago, the Department of Labor formed a departmental committee on the Older Worker and launched an extensive project with investigation centering on six areas:

1. The work qualities of older workers.
2. The obstacles, if any, to employment of older workers which pension plans create.
3. Clauses from union-management contracts which take care of jobs for older workers.
4. Employment problems and practices—the what and why of employer policies regarding employment of older people.
5. The possibilities of individual placement services to obtain jobs for qualified oldsters.
6. The employment outlook for mature women.

Already the federal government has eliminated maximum age limits on federal competitive civil service jobs, and the Civil Service Commission has announced studies that will examine problems of employment of older workers in government.

In 1958 Sen. John Kennedy, (Dem., Mass.) directed the staff of the Senate Subcommittee on Labor to undertake a comprehensive study of the needs of older citizens to lay the foundation for a full legislative program on behalf of a 10-point “bill of rights for our senior citizens.” This program contained the following points:

1. The federal government should encourage greater employment among older persons so they can make maximum use of their skills.
2. Vocational training facilities must be expanded to help older citizens learn new skills and adjust to new jobs.
3. Housing for the aged needs more attention: a loan program is needed for those who wish to purchase homes and special assistance should be available to those who wish to convert houses to adjust to special requirements of the elderly.
4. Adequate medical and dental care must be made available to those of the upper age brackets.
5. Old Age and Survivors Insurance benefits which are “grossly inadequate for even a minimum standard of living” must be increased.
6. Public assistance payments for the aged should be increased even as the proportion of persons getting such payments is cut by means of some of the above-mentioned programs.
7. Recreational facilities for older persons should be expanded.

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<sup>3</sup> Bureau of National Affairs Daily Labor Report—8-18-58.

8. Federal government research facilities dealing with chronic illnesses and diseases of the aging should be expanded.
9. The federal government must also expand training of personnel and enlarge its research projects in the field of geriatrics.
10. An effective program of assistance to widows and dependents of older citizens must be established.

Senator Pat McNamara (Dem., Mich.), Chairman of the Senate Labor Subcommittee on Problems of the Aged and Aging, early in 1959 announced plans for a year-long inquiry—and he carried them out.

He first invited key spokesmen to Washington to act as a panel and lay down guidelines for study. Subsequently, hearings were held in Washington and in seven key cities at which government officials and representatives of interested groups testified. Most of the specific recommendations for legislation made by this Subcommittee are directed at advantages for the elderly. Only one seems to apply to the middle-aged:

“To assure those between 40 and 64 equal opportunity for employment, it urges states to consider at their next session legislation to outlaw such discrimination.

At the state level, seven states have already put “no-age-discrimination-in-hiring” laws on the books:

Massachusetts	1950
Pennsylvania	1955
Rhode Island	1956
New York	1958
Connecticut	1959
Oregon	1959
Wisconsin	1959

The Desmond Committee (New York State) — in discussing the effectiveness of such legislation—lists the following:

**PROS:**

1. Removes the sanction of discrimination.
2. Forces re-examination of unrealistic personnel policies.
3. Enables power and prestige of government to be used to “educate” employers.
4. Reduces overt symbols of discrimination such as age limitations in help wanted ads and job orders.

**CONS:**

1. Does not materially affect basic conditions of the labor market which primarily determine hiring of the 40-plus.
2. Does not wipe out stereotypes and prejudices about older workers.
3. Does not result in placement.
4. Evasion is simple, widespread and enforcement most difficult.

5. Provides an agency before which older workers may air their grievances.
6. Permits older workers to at least gain access to personnel managers and employment office.
7. Proclaims a state policy.
5. Does not strike at employer concern with increased costs of pensions, insurance, nor with promotion-from-within personnel policies.
6. Falsely raises hopes of older workers.
7. Interferes with "promotion from within" systems.

A statistical analysis of experience under state laws shows "no discernible relationship between the placement of older workers and the presence or non-existence of a non-discrimination law", regarding persons age 45 and over, according to Earl T. Klein, manpower development specialist for the U. S. Department of Labor. In New York, placements increased after the law was passed, but this had been accompanied by considerable advance study and education. The upward trend, in fact, began several years prior to passage of the New York law in 1958, Mr. Klein says, suggesting that an extremely important part of any program should be educational.

Another important procedure is job placement by the Employment Service. He points out:

"The successful placement of an older worker is perhaps the best way of convincing an employer that such workers are capable, and this leads to consideration and employment of others."

Further questions are raised by this excerpt from a memorandum issued by the National Committee on the Aging:<sup>4</sup>

"Experience with age discrimination legislation in other states, notably Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Pennsylvania, raises some doubt about the effectiveness of such legislation in creating job opportunities for older workers.

"Experience in Massachusetts and Rhode Island indicates that there has been relatively little activity under the statutes in those two states. A recent evaluation of experience in Pennsylvania points to the conclusion that the statute has done no harm, and may have done some good by focusing attention on the artificial age barriers to employment which are sometimes needlessly raised by employers. Specific achievements in any of these states, other than elimination of age specifications in advertising, are difficult to pinpoint.

"The difficulty arises from the fact that an employer's refusal to employ can always be based on considerations other than age. To what extent age discrimination legislation may constructively influence employer attitudes is essentially a matter of conjecture.

"We believe that, as a general principle, employers must be convinced of the value of older workers before older workers can expect relative improvement in their employment prospects. Employers are more likely to be convinced by demonstration than by coercion."

<sup>4</sup> June, 1958.

The N. Y. Joint Legislative Committee on the Aging is equally blunt:<sup>5</sup>

“The anti-discrimination laws reflect growing concern with unrealistic personnel policies, rather than substantive means of eliminating bias or enlarging job opportunities.”

Elder statesman Bernard M. Baruch underlined this thought when he told that very Committee:

“I do not believe that employment opportunities for the aging can be broadened by any kind of anti-discrimination legislation. You cannot legislate understanding. . . .”

But effective or not, these laws are moving in the direction of control. In the last decade a majority of states have established Councils or Committees to study the problems and opportunities brought about by increasing longevity. These groups are delving into the wider-ranging social and economic problems which result. Education, economics, health, rehabilitation, housing, home services, recreation and leisure are matters of concern to them, but invariably in their reports they foster the idea that employment is a key problem with older people.

State drives to “find jobs for workers shut out of the labor market by early age limits on hiring” have been financed by legislative appropriations and even Federal grants. Isador Lubin, former N. Y. State Industrial Commissioner, in launching such a program urged employers “to stop cutting themselves off arbitrarily from a vast reservoir of proven skill and to halt the moral disintegration, the social waste and the economic cost to the community that result when willingness and ability to fill a job are repudiated.”

Unquestionably, the Government has a signal role to perform in collecting useful data and statistics, so the nation can have reliable information on the progress being made and where the thorny problems lie.

There already exists a Federal Council on Aging, established by President Eisenhower in April 1956, made up of representatives from the 12 government departments and agencies which deal with older persons' problems. In a “memorandum” dated April 2nd, he explains his action:

“The marked rise in the number of older persons in our population has a continuing and fundamental impact on our society. . . . The great majority of older persons are capable of continuing their self-sufficiency and usefulness to the community if given the opportunity. Our task is to help in assuring that these opportunities are provided. . . .”

“To achieve this, and to assure that our older citizens are able to participate fully and effectively in the life of the community, emphasis should be placed on improvement in such areas as:

1. Preservation of physical and mental health, and rehabilitation
2. Income maintenance

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<sup>5</sup> 1958.

3. Employment and retirement
4. Housing, living arrangements and family relationships
5. Education, civic participation, and recreation.

“Within these fields lie new opportunities and responsibilities for greater participation by all our social institutions—secular and religious organizations, and local, State and Federal Government.

“In the Federal Government, activities and programs benefiting older persons are conducted in a number of agencies which administer health, welfare, housing, employment, and other programs affecting the population as a whole. These departments and agencies are charged with the basic responsibilities and have a wealth of experience and expert staff in their respective fields. They must continue to carry on their basic responsibilities. To supplement their efforts, there is a further need for coordinated policy development, planning and programming so that the departments and agencies can work together toward common objectives with a minimum of duplication and waste effort.

“To this end, I request that each of you designate a representative from your own Department or Agency to act with the other representatives so designated as a Federal Council on Aging. It will be the function of the Council to review existing programs in the light of emerging needs, and make recommendations to the appropriate departments and agencies as to emphases, priorities and provisions for unmet needs. Initiation of new programs and activities and changes in existing policies will remain the responsibility of heads of the departments or agencies directly affected.”

Two years later (September 1958) the President took further significant action by signing into law the White House Conference on the Aging Act. This act opens with the statement:

“The Congress hereby finds and declares that the public interest requires the enactment of legislation to formulate recommendations for immediate action to improving and developing programs to permit the country to take advantage of the experience and skills of the older persons in our population, to create conditions which will better enable them to meet their needs, and to further research on aging.”

In signing it, the President asked that the Conference, which will be held in January 1961, make sure that its recommendations are based on maximum individual responsibility, that the free choice of the individual and the idea of self-help be maintained, and that existing programs and agencies be used.

The Chairman of the Advisory Committee to the White House Conference is former Congressman Robert W. Kean of New Jersey. The Committee has set 2,800 as the number of delegates to the Conference:

- 1740 from the states
- 660 from national organizations
- 400 from the federal government

Intensive preparations are under way at the state level to develop plans and make recommendations to the 1961 conference, for action at the federal, state and local levels.

Though there are 20 subjects on the agenda, none is more critical to manufacturers than that of employment of the older worker.

In a business system where the welfare of each person depends primarily on his own efforts, it is essential that no arbitrary hiring limitations be imposed because of age. Surely the nation will not tolerate the economic loss resulting from any contrary policy, and will move to impose legislative sanctions if widespread need exists.

## V. A REALISTIC APPRAISAL OF INDUSTRY'S PERFORMANCE TODAY

Through the policy of hiring the best available applicant, the seasoned value of older workers has proved to outweigh any drawbacks—real or imagined. As a result, there is a growing realization that men often attain their greatest worth as employees in their later years. Workers between 45 and 65 are frequently at their best because of the knowledge and judgment they have gained through experience.

### *A. Factors Which Encourage Employment of Mature People*

There are a number of concurrent developments which have given impetus to their employment.

#### 1. NEW PROCESSES AND AUTOMATIC MACHINERY AID OLDER WORKERS

There is evidence on every hand that age limitations have already been eliminated to a larger extent than is generally realized. With the development of labor-saving machinery, with push-button and automatic operation, physical strength and stamina, as such, have become less important requirements for industrial employment.

It is true that industry has made these changes not to accommodate the mature employee, but to bring greater operating efficiency so that better products might be made available at lower prices. This in turn, however, has aided the older worker by opening up new employment opportunities. Even in those situations where slowed-down reaction time, increased fatigue or decreased ability to cope with job demands have made it advisable to re-engineer the job, the new techniques resulting have been an aid to both older and younger workers and tended

to simplify the work generally. Indeed, Senator Desmond points out that “industry is going to amazing lengths to re-engineer jobs.”

In a study covering 49 plants representing 67% of the employment in the area, the Industrial Management Council of Rochester<sup>6</sup> found that:

“Transfers and re-assignment of older employees to less strenuous jobs were reported by many companies; and others have established a policy of reserving light jobs for those who can no longer meet requirements of their former occupations.

“But most significant in the survey was the widespread use of labor-saving equipment as a part of a regular program to improve manufacturing methods. In common usage are electric hoists, cranes, fork lifts, etc.

“This brought about the reduction of the degree of physical application necessary to perform certain jobs.

“The natural outcome of reduced physical effort has made it possible for older employees to perform satisfactorily a mechanized job which they would have been unable to do under former job conditions.”

Advancing technology, of course, also frequently requires transferring employees to different jobs. Plant relocations and mergers sometimes also affect the older employee.

Where jobs are eliminated in the march of progress, responsible management will ease the transition insofar as possible, so as to minimize any possible disruption to employment.

## 2. THE GROWTH OF JOB ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION IN INDUSTRY

More and more employers are following the practice of analyzing and evaluating all the jobs in their plants in terms of mental and physical requirements. When this is done and applicants are selected on the basis of experience, skills, education and similar objective factors, an older applicant may be able to fill the job as well as, or better than a younger person. When emphasis is placed on ability, age becomes irrelevant.

With careful development of job specifications, employment becomes a matter of proper selection for and assignment to the job on the basis of individual ability to perform the duties. Anyone who can meet the requirements is a logical candidate for the job, regardless of age, sex, color or other factors unrelated to job qualification.

Discrimination of any kind is then automatically eliminated, as are misfits—for to employ or retain workers in jobs for which they are not fitted is economically unsound, socially indefensible, and unfair to the individual who finds himself in a job for which he is not suited.

<sup>6</sup> Report, N. Y. State Joint Legislative Committee on Problems of the Aging—1954—pp. 99-107.

The use of job specifications also minimizes charges of age discrimination when lack of qualification is the real job barrier.

### 3. PRACTICAL SELECTION AND PLACEMENT

By and large, the employer is likely to approach the task of hiring employees in a realistic manner. For any job opening, he will employ the person who he has reason to believe will do the best job. Employment of people and their assignment to jobs is determined by matching the individual's skills and qualifications with the requirements of the available position. In modern competitive business there is no place for prejudices and generalizations when it comes to choosing or promoting employees.

More and more, employers are coming to realize that they cannot afford to ignore the fact that there is no substitute for experience and the wisdom which comes with age.

Recognizing this fact, some companies are reviewing selection criteria to be sure they are giving mature workers the proper consideration. Many jobs which formerly required physical strength have been changed so that mechanical energy does the strenuous work. Yet as a matter of habit in hiring people there is a tendency to look for the same physical requirements even though the manual work is now being done by the machine.

Testing requirements may also need modification. Sometimes it is reasonable to set up lower norms for older persons. It is interesting that, while workers in the 35-45 age group are said to be the best producers, testing indicates<sup>7</sup> 40% of workers over 45 years of age can outproduce the younger men—even until they are 65.

Furthermore, older workers have been their own best advertisement. They are widely accepted at face value because they have proved themselves on the job.

#### ***B. Industry Finds Mature People Make Good Employees***

The question of how reliable, productive and adaptable the older worker is, how much special help he may need, if any, to keep up a good production rate is becoming increasingly important to management. Employers need to know what to expect from the older worker in the way of efficiency, work attitudes, etc.

1. A comparison of two NAM membership surveys (in 1939 and in 1951) sheds some light on this matter. On both occasions employers were asked to rate their older workers on the basis of work performance, attendance, safety, and work attitude as compared with the rest of the work force. Forty years was established as the dividing line between the younger and older workers in the 1939 survey. In the 1951 study the dividing line was advanced to 45 years in view of prevailing practice—a fact significant in itself. In 1939 the survey covered about 2500 companies; in 1951 it included some 3600 firms.

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<sup>7</sup> "It Pays To Test Before Hiring"—Iron Age, 3/5/59.

The comparisons indicated that in *work performance*, while 84.6% of the employers in 1939 rated the older worker as equal or better, by 1951 the figure had advanced to 92.7%.

The *attendance* improvement was even more striking—82.5% of the employers queried rated their older employees as equal, or better than the entire group in 1939, while in 1951, 98.1% said that their older employees were as regular, or more regular so far as attendance was concerned.

When it came to *safety*, 86.2% of the 1939 employers indicated that their older people were equal or better in avoiding accidents. By 1951 this figure had risen to 97.4%.

So far as *attitude towards work* is concerned, the older worker was rated superior or equal to the younger by 94.8% of employers in 1939. The more recent figure indicated that 99.2% of the reporting employers viewed the oldsters as equal to or better than the younger group in this respect.

It is significant that well over 90% of the reporting employers feel that their older employees are equal to or better than their younger associates on these important counts. In fact, employers report they strengthened their operations by hiring older applicants where heavy turnover and absenteeism were problems.

2. Most surveys comparing older workers with the rest of the work force with regard to work performance and reliability deal with the entire group and not with the *more recently hired individual who is along in years*. However, the Federation Employment Service in New York City has been actively engaged in getting jobs for oldsters since 1948. After one year on the job they checked on the older worker applicants placed in January to June 1951 to evaluate their work performance and their attendance records.

In this study 83% of the older workers placed had equalled or bettered the productivity of their younger associates, according to their employers. As for absence from work, 87% of the older group had records which were equal to or better than those of their younger co-workers. Where absenteeism is a serious problem, the antidote could well be the employment of more mature workers.

3. A 1958 survey by the Bureau of National Affairs, with 140 business executives participating, revealed that in selecting supervisors, age is ranked as the least important factor to be considered.

Of course, shorter hours and a shorter work week have made it possible for many mature people to remain in active, full employment longer than formerly. At the same time with the advancements in preventive medical programs, both within and outside the plant, the modern oldster is likely to be more active, physically healthier and longer-lived than his counterpart of a generation past.

In thousands of plants all over the land employers have found that from a dollars and cents point of view alone, older employees are an asset and not a liability. They

find them more experienced, generally more reliable, more conscientious, and more resistant to distraction from home problems and outside interests than younger workers.

Further, older workers tend to remain at a job longer than younger ones. They are less likely to quit. Opportunities to change employers are less likely to be seized by older employees than by youthful ones with less stable interests.

There are indications that the morale of older workers is better than that of younger persons. Their work habits are steady and they have a serious attitude toward the job. They are less apt to waste time.

Routine work seems to be less boring to them, less fatiguing and less monotonous. Their judgment is usually better and sounder.

They require less supervision once they are oriented on the job. In fact, they often have a stabilizing influence on others in the group and exercise a kind of "informal supervision."

But the few limitations that older workers have, should also be taken into account. Some may not be able to do work requiring certain kinds of physical exertion, and where muscles or stamina are prime requisites younger workers may be preferred.

Reflexes tend to slow down with advancing age. If dexterity and speed are essential qualifications, and more important than accuracy and judgment, the older person may not be the best choice.

While older workers have fewer accidents and less days away from work, recovery may take longer.

The qualities which make the older person more stable sometimes make him resistant to change—although fear for his security could be a more important factor in his reluctance to accept new methods or directions than so-called stubbornness.

### *C. More Jobs than Ever Before for Mature People*

Employment records in thousands of companies reveal that older workers are holding jobs in greater volume than ever before. This is especially true in industrial centers.

For instance, the director of the New York State Labor Department Division of Research and Statistics recently pointed out the tremendous increase in the number of older people in New York City. Between the 1940 and 1950<sup>8</sup> census, while the population of the city increased some 6%, the number of persons over 65 years of age increased 49%—more than eight times faster than the total population. At the same time, the group past 45 years of age increased 26%—more than four times faster than the entire population.

<sup>8</sup> The 1950 census is the latest one for which these statistics are available.

In spite of this tremendous increase of older people, employment in the over 65 age group was up 100%, while in the over-45 group, employment was 51% ahead of 1940. This indicates that employment of people over 45 increased twice as fast as did their number in the population. In fact, of the more than one-half million resident workers added during the decade (1940-1950), about 82% were people past 45 years of age.

That employers recognize the obvious advantage of hiring the more mature person who is qualified is further demonstrated by a recent report<sup>9</sup> of job placements by the New York State Employment Service. In the first half of 1953, workers over 45 years old placed in jobs were 21% of the total so placed. This figure increased to 30% for the same period in 1959. In short the older worker has half again a better chance of getting a job today than he had just a few years ago.

In May 1960, the N. Y. State Labor Department reported that "workers between 45 and 64 have been particularly successful in job hunting. Representing 29% of the job seekers, they accounted for 28% of the non-farm jobs the agency filled between July 1958 and June 1959."<sup>10</sup>

Other industrial centers disclose similar patterns. In Detroit, for instance, from 1940 to 1950, population in the over 65 group increased 62.4%. While men over 65 increased 69.9% in numbers, the employment of this group increased 109%. Women over 65 increased in number 56.1% while those employed increased 133.3%.

In Grand Rapids, men over 65 increased 24% while their employment increased 81.7% in this decade. In Flint, while men over 65 had increased 43% in numbers, their employment increased 108.5%. The Michigan study states:

"The older workers, who remain in the labor force, have the best employment records in the state, and the older women outdo the men in obtaining employment."

A more recent compilation of U. S. Census and Bureau of Labor Statistics figures indicates that the number of civilians working in the United States increased 35% from 1940 to 1955. During the same period the old people (65 and over) working increased 54%.

With employment on the rise, it is heartening to know that more jobs are going to the higher-age bracket than ever before.

A recent study<sup>11</sup> by the U. S. Department of Labor indicates that the rate of unemployment in the over-45 year old group as well as in the over-65 year group is considerably less than the average for young workers and somewhat less than the average

<sup>9</sup> New York Times—August 3, 1959.

<sup>10</sup> World Telegram—May 24, 1960.

<sup>11</sup> The Unemployed—Spring 1959: U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bureau of Employment Security, Washington, D. C.

for all age groups. Although the individual in these age groups who is seeking employment and encounters obstacles, finds no comfort in the fact that statistics show age, as such, is not a major factor in locating a job, it is encouraging to note the trend.

Developments, such as these, convincingly point up the fact that the older job applicant is enjoying greater job opportunities because of the ever-growing acceptance of mature workers in the labor market.

#### *D. Typical Example of Sound Employment Procedure*

More than half the employees at a Yonkers, N. Y. company are over 45. The company does not give preference to the middle-aged but in hiring the best available person for the job it has found more older people being selected.

Key step is careful screening by the Personnel Department so that no unqualified older applicants are referred to the department head, who must have adequate reasons if he rejects the applicant. Department heads know that the company frowns on specification of a maximum hiring age in requisitioning new help. *If an age limit is specified, it must be justified to the vice-president who is adept at countering arguments.*

The specific job in question is the frame of reference for the pre-employment physical. There is no attempt to require that all new employees meet certain general standards of physical fitness.

## VI. STEPPING UP TO THE RESPONSIBILITY — CALL TO ACTION

The higher age of the work force and the increasing number of older people willing and able to work, calls for change in traditional attitudes toward the employment of older people. Although American industry is today employing a higher percentage of older people than ever before, the growing trend toward longevity in our population, coupled with management's constant need for a competent and stable work force, indicates the desirability of an even greater utilization of the talents, capacities and experience of older persons. This is imperative both for the sake of the individual who must achieve satisfaction through our economic system, and for the sake of a productive economy to which mature men and women have a definite contribution to make.

We have already found in our conferences with employers on this subject an intense interest and willingness to do whatever lies within the realm of possibility. Many company personnel programs are already being adjusted to older workers.

While age limitations in employment have already been broken down to a larger extent than is generally realized, the NAM feels that a great deal remains to be done in the way of enhancing employment opportunities for older people. It may be well to review some of the chief factors involved:

- A. Employers are urged to analyze all jobs in the plant in terms of mental and physical requirements. When this is done and applicants are appraised in terms of their ability to meet job requirements, it is readily seen that an older applicant may be able to fill the job as well as, or better than, a younger person. Age becomes irrelevant and emphasis is placed on ability.
- B. Care should be taken to discourage any practice of restricting older people exclusively to set jobs such as guards, watchmen, elevator operators, cleaners, sweepers, oilers, etc.
- C. Some younger supervisors are reluctant to hire employees much older than themselves. This attitude stems from personal uncertainty or insecurity, as well as from the feeling that the newcomer will be resentful and, therefore, disinclined to cooperate.  
Pre-conditioning of both parties—and co-workers as well—will tend to alleviate this condition.
- D. Widespread respect for the principle of seniority has served to protect the older employee. Where union seniority clauses make it more difficult to hire the “over-45” job seeker, the cooperation of the union in overcoming this difficulty should be sought.
- E. It is generally agreed that the existence of a pension plan does not mitigate against the hiring of “over-45” job seekers. There is, however, a feeling that retiring a worker with a small pension or no pension at all, (as a result of short tenure) is poor public relations.

But with pension plans becoming more widespread, it is increasingly likely that the mature applicant already has some pension coverage through one or more prior jobs.

Where the employer wants to, he will find a way to hire mature people as evidenced by the many plants where a skilled man is hired at 64.

F. There are many areas where employers have a job to do in getting information to their communities and the public generally, stressing industry's problems and progress in employing older workers. For example:

1. It is recognized that a "promotion from within" policy usually limits job opportunities for older applicants by leaving only the lower-paying, less desirable jobs available to them, except where there is no one within the organization qualified to fill a vacancy.

Few people understand that this very policy, by providing the means whereby mature people are kept satisfyingly at work, has itself been a responsible contribution to the *solution* of the problem.

Whenever a man is moved up in an organization, it may give rise to a whole series of promotions, affording younger people the chance they seek to advance. Employers would be wise to work toward a wider appreciation of the benefits of promotion-from-within and the unquestioned fact that although this principle favors more jobs for younger people, at the expense of more jobs for the older, its values are obvious.

"Promotion-from-within" was established primarily to benefit the individual employee. The employer might often find it preferable to fill a new opening from the outside—but because the policy of advancing his own employees is thoroughly accepted and practiced, industry should not be castigated for the fact that the older applicant is disadvantaged thereby. No way has yet been found "to have your cake and eat it, too."

2. There is also need for broader understanding of the fact that adding "over-45" newcomers to a work force already employing a large percentage of older people interferes with balanced replacements.

When the company refuses to accept age limitations in hiring, the only limitation then becomes the applicant's own ability to meet the physical and mental requirements of the job.

With such a background a company can adopt a positive policy where the yardstick for employment in all jobs is qualification alone, training its personnel workers and supervisors to adhere strictly to this policy.

We are now at a point where middle-aged and older people form a considerable part of the work force potential, with the definite prospect of a manpower shortage in the younger age groups.

With the steadily increasing demand for more people to man our industries and services, there is a pressing urgency to re-examine employment practices immediately. To neglect this task is to penalize employer and mature applicant alike, for both parties—and the community as well—would then be deprived of the benefits which accrue to all when older individuals make their economic contribution in gainful employment:

- ... The employer gains qualified men and women who at age 45 or 55 are more likely to stay with him than those hired at a younger age. The talent and experience of the organization and the skills which may give it an edge over competitors—are thereby enhanced.
- ... The older employee benefits from gainful employment and a chance to maintain his Social Security standing. Invariably he responds with good work performance, loyalty and high morale.
- ... The community is advantaged through the reputation of a good place to work and live.

It is hoped that the suggestions here set forth will assist and encourage employers to make better use of the valuable skills which so many older people possess.

## *Appendix A*

### CONSIDERATIONS IN HIRING MATURE APPLICANTS

It is just good business to hire the best possible applicant for an available job. And while good employment procedures avoid generalizing or treating people as members of a group, there are certain factors which an employer might want to consider when dealing with mature job applicants.

#### *I. Favorable Characteristics of Older Employees*

##### STABILITY

Records indicate that as a group, older people less frequently quit jobs. Companies have solved situations where turn-over has been a problem by deliberately employing mature applicants.

##### ATTENDANCE

Surveys indicate that younger workers have the highest absentee rate. People over 50 are absent from work less than any other age group.

##### WORK PERFORMANCE

Employers in NAM surveys rate their older employees higher than the younger group on Work Performance. Patience and thoroughness with detailed application are characteristics of mature employees.

##### EXPERIENCE

Knowledge is increased by experience. The older worker presents an opportunity for management to capitalize on years of experience.

##### SAFETY

As workers grow older, they tend to become more careful. Records prove that younger workers are more susceptible to accidents. Older workers have the best safety records.

##### IMPROVED JUDGMENT

Obviously some people whether young or old are smarter than others, but greater wisdom usually comes with age. An older employee in the group can serve as a check on the more impulsive younger people.

##### WORK ATTITUDE

Attachment to his work, in fact a bit of possessiveness about his job, is characteristic of the older worker. Interest and job satisfaction are apt to be high with the mature employee. He is less likely to be distracted from his work.

#### *II. Unfavorable Characteristics of Older Employees*

##### LESS STRENGTH

As people grow older, there is usually a decline in strength of muscles and heart. Where physical strength is a prime requisite, younger workers may be preferred.

### LESS SPEED

Reflexes slow down with increasing age. Where dexterity and speed are essential qualifications, it might be wiser to consider the younger applicant.

### LONGER ILLNESS

While older workers have fewer accidents and less days away from work, when they are incapacitated, recovery takes longer.

### LESS ADAPTABLE

The qualities which make the older worker more stable sometimes make him resistant to change. Fear for his security could be a more important factor in his reluctance to accept new methods or directions than so-called stubbornness.

On balance, it is clear that for most jobs, the favorable factors greatly outweigh the less favorable, with the likelihood that mature applicants will make excellent employees.

## *Appendix B*

### HIGHLIGHTS OF NAM EFFORTS TO EXPAND JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR OLDER WORKERS

For over a quarter of a century the National Association of Manufacturers has been engaged in continuous activities to promote acceptance of the real value of mature individuals in manufacturing plants. The success of this program is indicated by some of the milestones in the Association's campaign for older job applicants, briefly summarized as follows:

- ... In 1929, one of the principal sessions of the NAM Congress of American Industry was devoted to a panel discussion of the "Older Employee In Industry." Later that same year at NAM Headquarters a program was launched for the "Older Employee In Industry." In this campaign, NAM secured the active participation of the National Industrial Conference Board, the National Industrial Council, the National Metal Trades Association, the United States Chamber of Commerce, the Society for the Advancement of Management, industrial relations consultants and four life insurance companies.
- ... In 1939, NAM conducted a survey of management practices with respect to mature employees, covering 2½ million people in manufacturing. This study, "Workers Over 40", was the first broad-gauge attempt to deal factually with this situation and indicated the increasing use of older employees in industry. These findings were used extensively as the basis of widespread programs to open up still wider job opportunities for mature employees. The United States Department of Commerce along with many other organizations gave this material wide distribution.
- ... In 1947, NAM began a series of conferences with manufacturers, to exchange information regarding the performance and contributions of older workers. Informal exchange of experience, as well as discussions at NAM Industrial Rela-

tions Institutes, continue to be a most effective means of opening up additional job opportunities for older employees.

- .. In 1948, realizing that only 25% of the job opportunities were found in manufacturing and that there were three times as many employment opportunities in other fields, the NAM in cooperation with the United States Chamber of Commerce, extended its older worker study to include trade and commerce as well as manufacturing. The results of this survey indicated that employers generally were opening their job opportunities to more and more older workers.
- .. In 1949, NAM published "Employment of the Physically Handicapped and Older Workers", a study indicating how industry strengthens the economy by supplying additional job opportunities to qualified applicants without regard to age or physical disability as such. This work was used extensively as the basis of industry programs to extend employment to the physically handicapped and older worker.
- .. The NAM Industrial Relations Division has taken a leading part in promotional and educational activities in behalf of the aging. Beginning in 1949 it has regularly participated in the University of Michigan Institutes on Problems of the Aging. In 1950 it was represented on the planning committee of the President's Conference on Aging, held under the auspices of the then Federal Security Administration. At that time it was agreed that the Conference should not be used as a springboard for legislation.
- .. In 1951, NAM conducted a survey of management evaluation of older worker performance, covering nearly 3½ million employees. When these results were compared with those of the 1939 survey, it was immediately evident that great strides had been made in the acceptance of older workers by employers in industry. These figures have been used extensively as the basis of widespread studies by government and private agencies in attempting to further extend the acceptance of mature people as employees.
- .. In 1957, NAM made an extensive check of outstanding United States manufacturing companies, uncovering further utilization of older employees.
- .. In 1959, the NAM filed a statement with a Congressional Committee indicating that employment of mature workers in industry has been growing steadily over the years, now reaching the highest point in history.
- .. In 1960, NAM supplied the U. S. Department of Labor with 250 TV messages featuring Rudolph F. Bannow, President of NAM, for use on TV stations throughout the country. This public interest story featured job opportunities for mature workers and the advantages of hiring these people.
- .. In 1960, a group of prominent industrialists\* formed the NAM Committee on Employment of the Mature Worker to study and promote additional job opportunities for this group.

While these highlights indicate significant progress, the ultimate objective — that all applicants be employed in accordance with their qualifications — calls for action on the broadest possible front.

The National Association of Manufacturers continues to drive home the fact that older workers have qualifications which are decided assets in our business life by aggressive education and leadership programs. Some of these follow:

\* List available on request.

## *NAM Activities to Open Employment Doors for Older Workers*

1. The NAM undertakes surveys to evaluate management policies, philosophy, and actual practices in dealing with older applicants, over-age applicants, and to determine the actual on-the-job performance of these groups of employees.
2. The NAM disseminates on a broad-scale basis, educational materials designed to guide industrial management in dealing with over-age applicants seeking employment.
3. The NAM provides practical and sound information to promote greater understanding on the part of industrial management of the contribution older workers can make and strongly recommends that employers re-evaluate their existing employment practices to make sure that each older applicant is appraised in light of the specific requirements of the job that is being filled.
4. The NAM issues statements promoting job opportunities for the older worker, pointing to the tremendous reservoirs of judgment, performance, and loyalties inherent in this group of employees.
5. The NAM conducts meetings, conferences, and roundtable clinics for member companies designed to stimulate acceptance of older workers on the basis of their qualifications for key jobs, irrespective of the question of age or other arbitrary factors.
6. The NAM participates in work sessions, study groups, and national conferences on employment for older workers held by the national and state governments, welfare organizations, universities, and other groups.
7. The NAM regularly uses radio and television programs to demonstrate to the public generally the substantial contribution to our economic prosperity which mature workers are making. By showing older employees efficiently at work, other employers are encouraged to hire qualified applicants.

## *Appendix C*

### SELECTED REFERENCES ON EMPLOYMENT OF MATURE WORKERS

#### *I. NAM Publications*

NAM STATEMENT BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON PROBLEMS OF THE AGED AND AGING, SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC WELFARE, August 14, 1959

JOB OUTLOOK FOR OLDER WORKERS. Voice of NAM Radio Broadcast, August 1959

It's YOUR BUSINESS — ABC Radio Network Broadcast. Interview with John Convery, September 1958

THE NAM URGES BROADER ACCEPTANCE OF OLDER JOB SEEKERS, July 1957

INDUSTRIAL EXPERIENCE WITH THE 'OVER-45' JOB SEEKER, July 1957

AGE IS NO BARRIER. Address before the Pennsylvania Gerontological Society, Philadelphia, Pa., March 1957

EMPLOYMENT OF THE PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED AND OLDER WORKERS. NAM Survey findings, November 1953

EARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR MATURE WORKERS — FACTS, OBSTACLES AND POINTS OF VIEW. Address at University of Michigan, 6th Annual Conference on the Aging

HOW INDUSTRY LOOKS AT THE EMPLOYMENT OF OLDER PEOPLE. Address at University of Michigan, 2nd Annual Conference on the Aging

## *II. U. S. Government Publications*

COMPARATIVE JOB PERFORMANCE BY AGE: OFFICE WORKERS. Bulletin 1273, U. S. Dept. of Labor, February 1960.

MANPOWER, CHALLENGE OF THE 1960's. U. S. Department of Labor, Washington 25, D. C., January 1960.

THE OLDER WORKER AND HIRING PRACTICES. Monthly Labor Review, November 1959.

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STUDIES OF THE AGED AND AGING - EMPLOYMENT. Staff Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, U. S. Senate, U. S. Government Printing Office, January 1957.

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EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC STATUS OF OLDER MEN AND WOMEN. Bulletin No. 1213, U. S. Department of Labor, Washington 25, D. C., 1956, 30¢.

COUNSELING AND PLACEMENT SERVICES FOR OLDER WORKERS. Bulletin BES No. E-152, Bureau of Employment Security, U. S. Department of Labor, Washington 25, D. C. 1956, 50¢.

OLDER WORKER ADJUSTMENT TO LABOR MARKET PRACTICES: AN ANALYSIS OF EXPERIENCE IN SEVEN MAJOR LABOR MARKETS. Bulletin BES No. R-151, Bureau of Employment Security, U. S. Department of Labor, Washington 25, D. C. 1956, \$1.25.

PENSION COSTS IN RELATION TO THE HIRING OF OLDER WORKERS. Bulletin BES No. E-150, Bureau of Employment Security, U. S. Department of Labor, Washington 25, D. C. 1956, 25¢.

**JOB PERFORMANCE AND AGE: A STUDY IN MEASUREMENT.** Bulletin No. 1203, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U. S. Department of Labor, Washington 25, D. C. 1956, 45¢.

**OLDER WORKERS UNDER COLLECTIVE BARGAINING: PART I—HIRING, RETENTION, JOB TERMINATION.** Bulletin No. 1199-1, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U. S. Department of Labor, Washington 25, D. C. 1956, 25¢.

**OLDER WORKERS UNDER COLLECTIVE BARGAINING: PART II—HEALTH AND INSURANCE PLANS, PENSION PLANS.** Bulletin No. 1199-2, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U. S. Department of Labor, Washington 25, D. C. 1956, 25¢.

**MEMO ON JOB-FINDING FOR THE MATURE WOMAN.** U. S. Department of Labor, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C. 1955, 5¢.

**WORKERS ARE YOUNGER LONGER.** Studies of Older Workers in Five Cities. U. S. Department of Labor, Washington 25, D. C. 1953.

**FACT BOOK ON AGING.** Committee on Aging and Geriatrics, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington 25, D. C. 1952, 30¢.

**HIRING OLDER WOMEN.** Leaflet No. 12, U. S. Department of Labor, Washington 25, D. C. 1951, 5¢.

### ***III. Other Publications***

**MYTHS ABOUT THE WORKER PAST 40.** James P. Mitchell, N. Y. Times, June 19, 1960.

**EMPLOYMENT PROBLEMS OF OLDER WORKERS, also THE OLDER WORKER AND HIRING PRACTICES.** Institute of Industrial Relations, University of California, Berkeley 4, California, 1960.

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**UTILIZING OLDER WORKERS IN SMALL INDUSTRY.** Management Aids for Small Manufacturers, Small Business Administration, Washington 25, D. C., March 1957.

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**JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR OLDER PEOPLE.** Edward Kahn, Philadelphia Center for Older People, 921 N. 6th Street, Philadelphia 23, Pennsylvania, 75 pgs., 1957, \$1.00.

**OCCUPATIONAL PATTERNS OF OLDER WORKERS — 1940 and 1950.** Reprint from "Making the Years Count", N. Y. Joint Legislative Committee on Problems of the Aging, State Senate, Albany, N. Y., 1955.

**EMPLOYMENT OF THE OLDER WORKER.** The W. E. Upjohn Institute for Community Research, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 24 pgs., 1953.

**THE UTILIZATION OF OLDER WORKERS.** John W. McConnell, N. Y. State School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y., 1953.

**EFFECTIVE USE OF OLDER WORKERS.** Elizabeth L. Breckenbridge, Wilcox and Follett Company, Chicago, Illinois, 224 pgs., 1953.

**MEMO TO MATURE WORKERS RE HOW TO GET A JOB.** Federation Employment Service, 42 E. 41st Street, New York, N. Y., 16 pgs., 1951.

