

Old age - Societies, etc. ✓
aging.

What it is;

The National Committee on the Aging

What it does.

[New York, n.d.]

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THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON THE AGING
NATIONAL SOCIAL WELFARE ASSEMBLY, INC.
345 East 46th Street • New York 17, New York

**THE GROWING PROPORTION of older people
in our population is one of the most
important factors in the economic, social,
and political structure of this nation
Everyone is affected. The mission of
The National Committee on the Aging is to
help find ways to develop the physical,
spiritual, emotional and material resources
older people will need so that each may
live out his added years with dignity as a
useful member of society.**

**G. WARFIELD HOBBS, *Chairman*
The National Committee on the Aging**

WHAT IT IS...

Why The Committee...

The National Committee on the Aging is a central, national resource for planning, information, consultation and materials. It is made up of 250 members representing the many interests and concerns of older people. One-fourth are from business and industry. The others are from organized labor, health professions, social work, the clergy, education, housing, research, government, and state and local committees on the aging.

In 1950, The Committee was organized as a standing committee of the National Social Welfare Assembly, a nonprofit organization. The Committee's support comes primarily from foundations and The Assembly. In 1956, the Ford Foundation made an allocation to strengthen and broaden the basic program and to expand the information and consultation services. The Committee staff includes consultants in health, social welfare, employment and retirement, a librarian, and special project personnel.

The National Committee on the Aging was organized at the request of communities, professional and civic groups, agencies of government and others who faced the pressing problems created by the growing number of older people in this country, and who recognized the need for more adequate planning and resources. Questions facing such groups included:

What are the needs of older people and their families? What part should older people have in our expanding American economy? When should workers retire from gainful employment? What economic and social protections are needed by older people and how should these be provided? How can older people be helped to retain status in their families and in the community? How important are part-time work and leisure hours activities? Do older people have special housing needs? What are the health needs and health potentials of older

The Situation Today . . .

people? How can communities organize to find answers to these questions and to mobilize resources to meet the varied needs of older people?

Each year the number of people who are 65 or more increases some 400 thousand, or approximately 1100 a day. Predictions to 1975 estimate that there will be more than 20 million who are 65 or over compared with 3 million in 1900 and nearly 15 million today. This means an increase of 47 percent in the 65 or over age group compared to 32 percent for the total population. Life expectancy today is 70 years, compared to 48 in 1900.

Our youth centered culture has not yet adjusted to these facts. Attitudes have kept older people from sharing fully in the social and economic life of the community and have kept the community from providing needed services. This represents a serious waste to this nation.

Today 60 percent of the men 65 and over are not in paid employment; the proportion of women is even higher. For the most part, people are retired from productive work on the basis of age without reference to capacity, or the needs of the economy. The result is an estimated annual loss in production of goods and services of between two and three billion dollars. The cost to tax-supported and privately financed retirement systems amounts to many billions of dollars each year.

Research is urgently needed to fill the gaps in our knowledge about the many aspects of aging and older people. A larger number of competent personnel, skilled in working with the aging, is essential. Guide lines to assist communities in thinking, planning and acting to advance the well-being of older people must be laid down.

The program of The National Committee on the Aging is designed to help groups and individuals find the understanding, knowledge and skills needed for everyone to live out his life as a useful member of society.

WHAT IT DOES...

The Library...

The Committee works with and through other organizations to develop concern for older people, as well as methods and resources for meeting their needs. Among the ways The Committee works are the following:

- **Provides a national information and consultation center**
- **Maintains a special library**
- **Keeps current on activities in the field**
- **Holds conferences and workshops**
- **Serves as a medium for interchange of information and ideas**
- **Encourages experimentation in programs and services**
- **Stimulates studies and research**
- **Conducts special projects and studies**
- **Presses for the training of professional personnel with competence in the field of aging**
- **Prepares books and pamphlets based on Committee activities**
- **Summarizes and distributes reports of pertinent work of others**
- **Produces films, exhibits and other visual aids, alone or in cooperation with others**
- **Lends kits of materials on specific problems**
- **Works with media of mass communication to combat the stereotype of age and to publicize programs and needs**
- **Gives field consultation within the limits of resources available**

The National Committee on the Aging maintains a special library as a basic resource for staff and Committee members, and for writers, researchers, students and those who plan or provide services for older people. The collection includes reports and unpublished manuscripts not generally available. The Library issues lists of major acquisitions and of significant new books

Conferences, Meetings and
Workshops . . .

Projects and Studies . . .

- programs in preparation for retirement provided by employers, labor unions, universities and communities
- businesses operated by or for retired people, and other organized means for providing useful activity
- pension plans, insurance provisions and other matters affecting the economic security and health of retired workers

HEALTH

- the team approach to the health needs of older people, since they may stem from a combination of medical, social and environmental factors
- awareness of the health potential of older people and the community facilities necessary to help the individual realize his potential
- programs in rehabilitation
- provision for medical care that is geographically accessible and within the financial resources of older people
- accident prevention and safety measures
- professional personnel, trained and motivated to care for the health needs of older people
- programs of industry designed to extend the working life of older employees
- development of objective tests for estimating the physical and psychomotor abilities of older people

HOUSING AND LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

- more imaginative planning which will result in better housing and a wider choice of living arrangements — individual houses or apartments, institutions, foster homes, boarding care, hotels
- services which will allow older people to remain in their own homes — homemaker service, home medical and nursing care, food services, friendly visiting

You and The Committee . . .

The National Social
Welfare Assembly . . .

welfare problems and to plan methods for meeting them. The program moves forward through a three-fold partnership of government and voluntary, national and local, lay and professional interests. It is a nonprofit organization, supported by contributions from affiliate national organizations, some 250 community chests, united funds or councils, individuals, corporations and foundations. The National Committee on the Aging, a standing committee of the National Social Welfare Assembly, receives a portion of its basic support from The Assembly.

- services needed in housing situations where older people constitute the major portion of the residents

RECREATION

- programs of clubs and multiservice centers offering recreation and leisure time interests
- development of standards for such programs

EDUCATION

- programs of adult education and retraining through public school systems, universities, religious groups, social centers and libraries

COUNSELING AND CASEWORK SERVICES

- strengthening counseling and casework services to assist individuals and families handle problems of adjustment, and economic, legal, housing, health and other matters

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

- organization of central planning bodies at national, state and local levels to study and define areas of need, to provide for coordination of services, and to offer information and referral help

If you or your organization want help with any of the matters mentioned in this folder, The National Committee on the Aging will try to assist you or will refer you to other resources in position to help. The Committee invites your assistance in the collection of useful material. Please send reports of pertinent programs, services and research. You are invited also to send the names of good speakers and other possible resource personnel in the field of the aging.

The National Social Welfare Assembly is the central, national planning and coordinating body for social welfare, created to study and define social

and periodicals, and offers a classification system. Consultation is available on selecting materials for collections, and on ways community libraries may serve older people.

The Committee conducts at least two national conferences each year and regional meetings by invitation. Regional meetings are designed to stimulate local interest, to point up major issues, and to help communities find practical solutions to their local problems. Workshops are one means of bringing expert opinion and experience to bear on specific and troubling topics.

The Committee carries on special projects and studies of broad concern for which there seems to be no other appropriate group to assume responsibility. So far these have been in the general fields of sheltered care and the utilization of older workers.

Standards of Care for Older People in Institutions, developed by one project, has been commonly accepted by governmental and voluntary groups as the authoritative material in the field. To help implement standards and to provide basic information for architects and planners, The Committee conducted an architectural competition on planning and building homes for the aged. The results provide the basis for a book on the subject. A film, *A Place To Live*, is a sensitive portrayal of standards in action. This work in the various phases of standards for sheltered care has been financed by a series of grants from the Frederick and Amelia Schimper Foundation.

A project on the utilization of older workers organized and conducted the first National Conference on Retirement. This Conference together with further study resulted in two major books, *Criteria for Retirement*, published by G. P. Putnam's Sons in 1953, and *Flexible Retirement*, published in 1957 by the same com-

Books, Pamphlets and Films . . .

Areas of Special Concern . . .

pany. This work was financed by the McGregor Fund of Detroit.

Projects now in progress include a study on the utilization of older scientific and professional personnel under a grant from The Dorr Foundation, and a study of standards for clubs and multiservice centers under a grant from the Frederick and Amelia Schimper Foundation.

An important part of The Committee program is the preparation and distribution of printed materials and visual aids. Some are based on special projects, others on conferences and workshops. *Current Developments*, a new series, reports a round-up of selected experience on specific subjects. A *news bulletin* is distributed periodically to Committee members and others requesting it.

The Committee has identified certain areas of special concern, to which particular attention is paid in gathering and disseminating information, defining areas needing further study and research, and encouraging action by groups and individuals.

EMPLOYMENT

- development of objective criteria for employment and retirement which, in addition to age, will recognize and evaluate individual differences
- evaluation of actual experience in the employment of older workers
- experimentation in job reassignment, redesign and retraining
- promotion of job opportunities for older people

RETIREMENT

- experiences with flexible rather than age-based compulsory retirement
- effects of retirement on the individual in such matters as reduced income, lack of useful activity, loss of fixed status in society

WITH THE JOINED EFFORTS of business and industry, labor and government, the professions and citizens at large, we can build a truly effective community for older people.

**OLLIE A. RANDALL, *Vice Chairman*
The National Committee on the Aging**

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