

Older workers (1947)

SURVEY

of the

OLDER AGE GROUP
*

of

APPLICANTS FOR EMPLOYMENT

Canada. NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

ONTARIO REGION

SEPTEMBER, 1947

Toronto

RECEIVED

INSTITUTE OF
INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

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PART II

SURVEY OF CURRENT UNEMPLOYED

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F O R E W O R D

Increasing concern is being indicated by responsible bodies across Canada about the problem of older persons obtaining employment. Emphasis is added to this matter when it is realized that the lower limits of the age group concerned embrace those 45 years of age and, in some cases, as young as 35 to 40 years of age.

This problem received attention by the Ontario Advisory Committee to National Selective Service in 1945 when this problem was not so acute -- a sub-committee under the chairmanship of Professor T. W. Cook submitted a very complete analysis of the situation including recommendations, dated March 20, 1945.

More recently, leadership in bringing this matter to the public has been given by Mr. Arthur MacNamara, Deputy Minister, Department of Labour, Ottawa, in several magazine articles and through "The People Ask" series of weekly broadcasts produced by the Department of Labour.

During the past year, the Department of Veterans' Affairs and National Employment Service instituted a joint effort to obtain employment for the large number of dual service veterans then unemployed. This special drive produced very satisfactory results due, mainly, to the fact that the men concerned had served in two wars. The latter aspect emphasized the need for a broader approach to the problem as far as civilians are concerned.

A special report entitled "Employment of Older Age Groups" was produced by the British Columbia Regional Employment Committee of the National Employment Service last March. This included a survey of the situation in the three larger offices of that Region and carried some significant recommendations.

The Ontario Regional Advisory Board of the Department of Labour again directed its attention to this problem at its meeting in August by appointing a sub-committee to review the current situation. The following report was prepared in this connection by the staff of the Ontario Regional Office of the National Employment Service.

In giving this report broader distribution we would remind readers that, since it was meant merely to supply basic data for a small committee whose members were familiar with the background of the problem, narrative content has been kept to a minimum.

B. G. Sullivan,
Ontario Regional Superintendent.

THE PROBLEM

1. Older age group becoming an increasingly large proportion of population:

The "over 45" age group comprises an enlarging segment of the total population. Its size depends upon a number of complex factors. Improved standards of living, including nutritional advances lead to higher life expectancy with marked increase in the size of the "over 45" group. Immigration or the lack of it has its effect. A lowered or increased birth rate plays its part in raising or lowering the proportion of the older group to the total population.

That this group is increasing in size in relation to the total Canadian population is borne out by the following census facts:

	<u>% of Population over 45 years.</u>
In 1871	15
In 1901	9
In 1931	29
In 1941	31

That is, in 1941 approximately one-third of the population was over 45 years of age. Although the population is again being rejuvenated by increasing immigration and a rising birth rate, the "older age" segment of the population may be expected to continue to form an enlarging section of the labour force.

The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company states that in the U.S.A. -- 13% of the population were over 45 in 1850; 28% were over 45 in 1945. They predict that 40% will be over 45 in 1980.

Again Dr. Carlson, Professor of Physiology, University of Chicago, says, "Fifty years hence about 15 out of 100 people will be 65 years old".

2. Current trend of employers to prefer younger persons:

A. Survey of vacancies in Toronto, April, 1947

In an analysis of orders in the Toronto Men's Employment Office - April, 1947, involving 1,458 vacancies for unskilled help, the breakdown of ages required was as follows:

Concerning 1076 or 74% of the vacancies, the employers stipulated that applicants must be under 45 years.

341 or 23% of the vacancies were without any age restriction. For the most part these jobs would be filled by younger applicants.

40 or 2.5% of the vacancies indicated positions that might be filled by men over 45 years and up to 55 years.

The accompanying graph (page 2) shows the relationship between the present number of male applicants and the number of available unskilled jobs within certain age limits in the Toronto Men's Employment Office.

One fact of vital importance is clearly evident. While there were 1,458 unskilled job opportunities evident, only 40 of these were available for the large group of 1646 applicants over 45 years of age.

B. Objections raised by employers to engaging men 45 and over

Five main objections to the older worker have been made:

- (1) Old age results in a lessening of productivity.

- (2) Accident frequency increases with age. ✓
- (3) Group Insurance is more expensive for older aged. ✓
- (4) Pension plans do not make it practical to engage workers past 40. ✓
- (5) The older worker is not so adaptable in learning new techniques. ✓

The first two objections have been shown to be untrue. In the automobile industry, which is largely on a piece-work basis, earnings reached their peak in the age group between 50 and 55 years. Again, accidents are more prevalent in the group between 20 and 24 years. Group Insurance will cost the employer a higher rate but reduced labour turnover will be a saving.

The Pension Plan might be a real difficulty in hiring older workers. However, most plans do not stipulate that all employees must be covered, while others allow for the return of contributions to workers who, on separation, have not been with the firm long enough to warrant a pension.

It is a common idea that older persons resist change and hence cannot easily learn new techniques. This conception was generally disproved during the War when we had old men doing new jobs and performing them as efficiently as younger men.

3. Result of these two trends: Younger workers having to support older group

The growing proportion of the older persons to the total population and the trend of employers to prefer younger employees result in an increased number of elderly persons living in retirement. In many cases, the cost of their maintenance must be borne, in whole or in part, by the younger worker.

.....

P A R T T W O

SURVEY OF CURRENT UNEMPLOYED

Scope of Survey

This survey deals with an evaluation of the "over 45" age group of applicants for employment in five of the larger offices in the Ontario Region, National Employment Service --

Hamilton - Oshawa - Ottawa - Toronto - Windsor

Together with an evaluation of the work capabilities of these applicants, a brief appraisal of the employment probabilities and allied information is given.

That such a survey should prove valuable at the present time is disclosed by an examination of the last quarterly summary of the unemployed applicants by age groups registered in the offices of the Region.

1. Ontario Region as a whole:

A. Unemployed registered on July 31, 1947

On July 31, 1947, in the Ontario Region, there were:

17,845 unplaced male applicants (claimants 7,986; non-claimants 9,859)

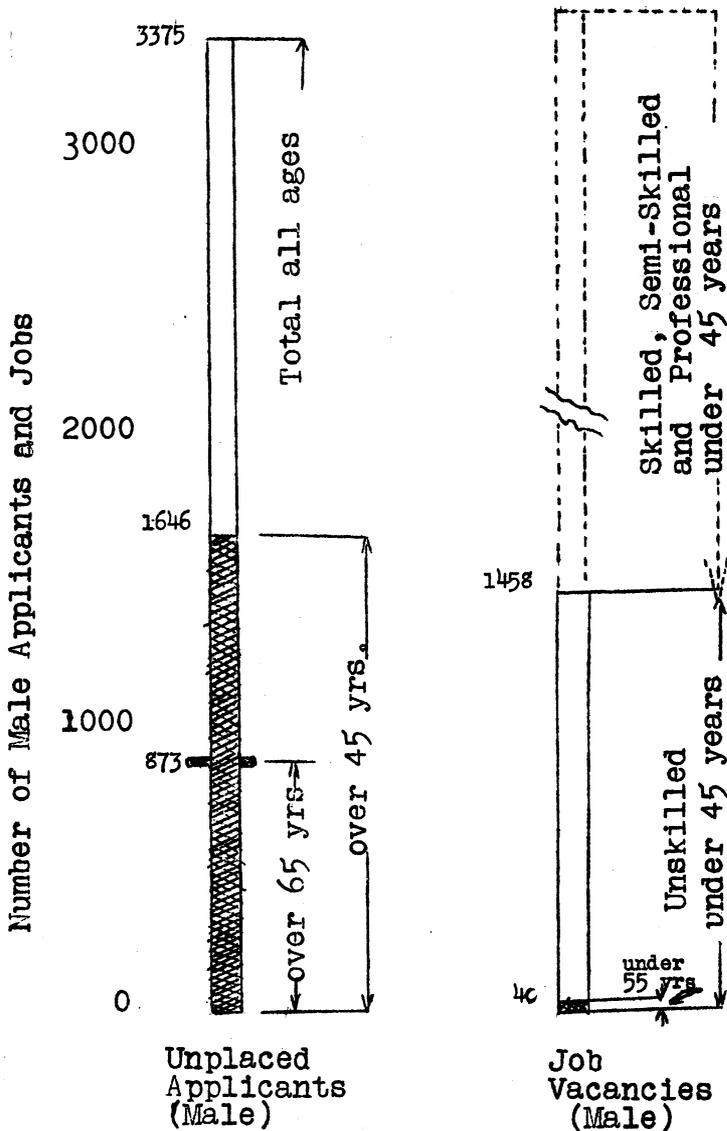
Of these -

3,671 or 20.5% were 45-64 years (claimants 2,398; non-claimants 1,273)

2,943 or 16.5% were 65 years and over (claimants 2,319; non-claimants 624)

6,614 or 37% were 45 years of age and over.

NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE
ONTARIO REGION
OLDER AGE GROUP SURVEY
APPLICANTS AND JOBS
in Toronto, Ont.
September
1947



- 4 -

10,831 unplaced female applicants (claimants 5,430;
non-claimants 5,401)

Of these -

1,383 or 12.8% were 45-64 years (claimants 902; non-claimants 481)

198 or 1.8% were 65 years and over

1,581 or 14.6% were 45 years of age and over.

B. Exhaustion of Unemployment Insurance Benefits, 1946

That persons in the "over 45" age group not only form a large proportion of the unemployed at the present time - but also that these persons stay unemployed for a longer period, is borne out by a study of the exhaustion of unemployment benefits in 1946.

The total number of persons who exhausted benefit rights in the Ontario Region during the year 1946 were 19,575. Of these -

11,075 were MALES

3,080 were under 40 years of age

1,363 were 40 to 49

1,867 were 50 to 59

3,147 were 60 to 69

1,607 were 70 years and over

7,984 (72%) were 40 plus (in 11 cases age was not stated)

8,500 were FEMALES

6,028 were under 40 years of age

1,594 were 40 to 49

645 were 50 to 59

188 were 60 to 69

35 were 70 years and over

2,462 (29.9%) were 40 plus (in 10 cases age was not stated)

A study of the above figures would appear to indicate that men over 40 tend to remain unemployed over a longer period than in the case with younger men.

In the case of women the conclusion is not so clear unless one considers the relatively smaller group of older women working at gainful occupations.

2. Local offices with greatest load of unemployed:

A. Basic statistics - Male and Female

In the offices where the unplaced applicants "over 45" were surveyed the proportions of the older group to the total registrants on September 4, 1947, were as follows:

MALES

- 5 -

	Total Registrants	Over 45	%
Hamilton	1380	586	42.5
Oshawa	689	217	31.3
Ottawa	1370	642	46.5
Toronto	3375	1646	48.7
Windsor	<u>1198</u>	373	31.1
	8012		

(The males registered for employment in these offices constituted 57% of the Ontario Regional total of 14,104)

FEMALES

	Total Registrants	Over 45	%
Hamilton	485	66	13.5
Oshawa	731	69	9.5
Ottawa	2061	444	21.5
Toronto	527	245	46.5
Windsor	<u>1480</u>	122	8.2
	5284		

(The women registered for employment in these offices constituted 61% of the Ontario Regional total of 8,654)

From the above tables it would appear evident that apart from Ottawa and Toronto, the problem of unplaced older female applicants was not acute in the offices surveyed.

For the older male applicants, Oshawa and Windsor were on a parity with 31% of total registrants. This is comparable to the proportion of persons "over 45" in the general population. Hamilton, Ottawa and Toronto had 42%, 46% and 49% respectively in the older age group. Approximately one-half the men registered for employment in the Toronto office were in this class.

B. Work capacity of older age group

In the statistical reports which follow the information was based on registrations as they were recorded at the present time in the Hamilton, Oshawa, Ottawa, Toronto and Windsor offices. The capabilities of the applicants were estimated on the basis of the registration cards supplemented by the Employment Officers to whom many of the applicants were known:

Fully capable - without any known impairment except age.

Partially capable - with some known disability which limited the capability of the applicant.

Not capable - because of disability (including frailty) deemed not capable of gainful employment.

The accompanying tables show that of the men aged -

- 45 to 54 years - 66.7% are fully capable
30.7% are partially capable
2.6% are not capable
- 55 to 64 years - 57.3% are fully capable
39.4% are partially capable
3.3% are not capable
- 65 years & over - 48.8% are fully capable
40.1% are partially capable
11.1% are not capable

and of the women aged -

- 6 -

45 to 54 years - 82.5% are fully capable
15.4% are partially capable
2.1% are not capable

55 to 64 years - 77% are fully capable
17.7% are partially capable
5.3% are not capable

* 65 years & over- 62.8% are fully capable
20% are partially capable
17.2% are not capable.

* only 75 women were in this group.

3. Study of waiting period for recent placements: Toronto

In order to ascertain the comparative time of waiting for employment following registration of the various age groups, a survey was made of all placements in the Toronto Employment Offices. This was done for the two-week period of September 2 to 15, 1947, inclusive.

Findings:

Sixty-five percent of the placements of all male applicants were effected on the same day that the applications were filed.

This would be a creditable showing if we were assured that each job was quite suitable to each applicant referred thereto. There are at present 2½ jobs for each male applicant in the Toronto office. This would be a favourable condition for the placement of applicants except for the fact that these figures fail to convey a true picture of the employment situation.

On September 4, 1947, the following situation existed in the Toronto office:

	<u>Applicants</u>	<u>Vacancies</u>
Cabinet Makers	3	104
Bricklayers	1	145
Carpenters	16	319
Cement Finishers	0	50

Compare with:

Protective Services	238	21
---------------------	-----	----

Because of the lack of relation of the types of vacancies and the occupations of applicants, it would appear improbable that jobs suitable in location, wages and work requirements would be immediately available for the majority of applicants at the time of registration. In other words, this study would seem to show that those whose applications had been in the live file for more than 2 or 3 days do not receive the attention to which seniority of registration entitles them.

For example, many of the applicants for protective services and allied jobs are among the older age groups. The relationship of applicants to jobs of 238:21 is evidence that the vast majority of these persons have no prospect of employment in the occupation for which they are registered. One of three courses must follow:

- (1) Ignore the problem and allow the application to become dormant through inaction.
- (2) Intensify activity to obtain a great volume of openings.
- (3) Provide an adequate service to these persons:
 - (a) counselling the applicants and bringing out potential abilities in occupations in demand; and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE
ONTARIO REGION

September, 1947.

HAMILTON
Survey of Unplaced Older Persons in

Office.

OCCUPATIONS	SEX	NUMBER OF UNPLACED APPLICANTS IN OLDER AGE GROUPS												
		45 to 54 Years				55 to 64 Years				65 Years & Over				
		F.C.	P.C.	H.C.	Total	F.C.	P.C.	H.C.	Total	F.C.	P.C.	H.C.	Total	
Professional, Office & Sales	M	16	2		18	14	4		18	11	12	3	26	62
		14	6		20	27	12	5	44	71	22	4	97	161
Agriculture		3			3	1			1	2	1		3	7
		26	9	1	36	17	4	1	22	27	7	3	37	95
Unskilled		18	8		26	63	11	1	75	148	8	4	160	261
		77	25	1	103	122	31	7	160	259	50	14	323	586
Professional, Office & Sales	F	6			6	2			2		1		1	9
Service		12	5		17	11			11	5			5	33
		5	1		6	2	2		4		1		1	11
Unskilled		7	2		9	4			4					13
		30	8		38	19	2		21	5	2		7	66
TOTAL														

LEGEND: F.C. -- Fully Capable

P.C. -- Partially Capable

H.C. -- Not Capable

NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE
ONTARIO REGION

September, 1947.

Survey of Unplaced Older Persons inOSHAWA.....Office.

OCCUPATIONS	SEX	NUMBER OF UNPLACED APPLICANTS IN OLDER AGE GROUPS												TOTAL
		45 to 54 Years			55 to 64 Years			65 Years & Over			Total			
		F.C.	P.C.	N.C.	Total	F.C.	P.C.	N.C.	Total	F.C.		P.C.	N.C.	
Professional, Office & Sales	M	1	3		4	5			5	1	1		2	11
Service		3	3		6	6	7		13	8	11	3	22	41
Agriculture						1			1					1
Skilled and Semi-Skilled		14	1		15	7	8		15		4	4	8	38
Unskilled		27	16		43	11	16		27	11	29	15	55	125
TOTAL		45	23		68	30	31		61	20	45	22	87	216
Professional, Office & Sales	F	12	1		13	2			2					15
Service		6			6	1			1					7
Agriculture														
Skilled and Semi-Skilled		2	1		3	2			2		1		1	6
Unskilled		36			36	5			5					41
TOTAL		56	2		58	10			10		1		1	69

LEGEND: F.C. - Fully Capable

P.C. - Partially Capable

N.C. - Not Capable

NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE
ONTARIO REGION

September, 1947. OTTAWA
Survey of Unplaced Older Persons in

Office.

OCCUPATIONS	SEX	NUMBER OF UNPLACED APPLICANTS IN OLDER AGE GROUPS												TOTAL
		45 to 54 Years			55 to 64 Years			65 Years & Over			Total			
		F.C.	P.C.	N.C.	F.C.	P.C.	N.C.	F.C.	P.C.	N.C.				
Professional, Office & Sales	M	81	20		61	13		74	28	6		34	208	
Service		16	10		24	12	1	37	45	12		57	120	
Agriculture														
Skilled and Semi-Skilled		27	11		21	9		30	18	17		35	103	
Unskilled		23	26	12	39	35	4	78	52	17	2	71	210	
TOTAL		147	67	12	145	69	5	219	143	52	2	197	642	
Professional, Office & Sales	F	201	54	1	85	22		107	12	1	1	14	377	
Service		21	5		15	3		18	3	2		5	49	
Agriculture														
Skilled and Semi-Skilled		12	2			1		1	1	1		2	17	
Unskilled					1			1					1	
TOTAL		234	61	1	101	26		127	16	4	1	21	444	

M.C. - Not Capable

P.C. - Partially Capable

F.C. - Fully Capable

LEGEND:

NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

ONTARIO REGION

Survey of Unplaced Older Persons inOffice.
TORONTO

September, 1947.

NUMBER OF UNPLACED APPLICANTS IN OLDER AGE GROUPS

OCCUPATIONS	SEX	NUMBER OF UNPLACED APPLICANTS IN OLDER AGE GROUPS												TOTAL
		45 to 54 Years				55 to 64 Years				65 Years & Over				
		F.C.	P.C.	N.C.	Total	F.C.	P.C.	N.C.	Total	F.C.	P.C.	N.C.	Total	
Professional, Office & Sales	M	156	30	2	188	72	33	2	107	57	51	16	124	449
Service		21	33	2	56	57	64	6	127	127	179	45	351	534
Agriculture														
Skilled and Semi-Skilled		54	22	3	79	49	45	2	96	57	49	16	122	297
Unskilled		19	38	2	59	22	31	8	61	89	157	30	276	396
TOTAL		250	123	9	382	200	173	18	391	330	436	107	873	1646
Professional, Office & Sales	F	50	11	3	64	18	6	5	29	10	3	2	15	108
Service		36	3	3	42	13	3	3	19	12	1	5	18	79
Agriculture														
Skilled and Semi-Skilled		10	1		11	5	1	2	8	2	3	2	7	26
Unskilled		8	1	6	15	6	4	3	13		2	2	4	32
TOTAL		104	16	12	132	42	14	13	69	24	9	11	44	245

LEGEND: F.C. - Fully Capable

P.C. - Partially Capable

N.C. - Not Capable

NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE
ONTARIO REGION

September, 1947

WINDSOR
Survey of Unplaced Older Persons in

Office.

OCCUPATIONS	SEX	NUMBER OF UNPLACED APPLICANTS IN OLDER AGE GROUPS												TOTAL	
		45 to 54 Years			55 to 64 Years			65 Years & Over			Total				
		F.C.	P.C.	N.C.	Total	F.C.	P.C.	N.C.	Total	F.C.		P.C.	N.C.		
Professional, Office & Sales	M	10	9		19	5	6		11		3	1		4	34
Service		11	7		18	18	15		33	15	25	9		49	100
Agriculture		1			1						1			1	2
Skilled and Semi-Skilled		58	6		64	16	25		41	7	14	8		29	134
Unskilled		6	18		24	4	21	2	27	15	20	17		52	103
TOTAL		86	40		126	43	67	2	112	37	63	35		135	373
Professional, Office & Sales	F	22	3		25	4			4	1				1	30
Service		27			27	14	2		16						43
Agriculture															
Skilled and Semi-Skilled		25	4		29	5	1		6						35
Unskilled		12	1		13					1				1	14
TOTAL		86	8		94	23	3		26	2				2	122

LEGEND: F.C. - Fully Capable P.C. - Partially Capable N.C. - Not Capable

NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

ONTARIO REGION

September, 1947
Survey of Unplaced Older Persons in Hamilton, Oshawa, Ottawa, Toronto - Windsor

OCCUPATIONS	SEX	NUMBER OF UNPLACED APPLICANTS IN OLDER AGE GROUPS													TOTAL
		45 to 54 Years			55 to 64 Years			65 Years and Over			Total				
		F.C.	P.C.	N.C.	Total	F.C.	P.C.	N.C.	Total	F.C.		P.C.	N.C.	Total	
Professional, Office & sales	M	264	64	2	330	157	56	2	215	97	73	20	190	735	
Service		65	59	2	126	132	110	12	254	266	249	61	576	956	
Agriculture		4			4	2			2	2	2		4	10	
Skilled and Semi - Skilled		179	49	4	232	110	91	3	204	109	91	31	231	667	
Unskilled		93	106	14	213	139	114	15	268	315	231	68	614	1095	
TOTAL		605	278	22	905	540	371	32	943	789	646	180	1615	3463	
Professional, Office & Sales	F	291	69	4	364	111	28	5	144	23	4	3	31	539	
Service		102	13	3	118	54	8	3	65	20	3	5	28	211	
Agriculture															
Skilled and Semi-Skilled		54	9		63	14	5	2	21	3	6	2	11	95	
Unskilled		63	4	6	73	16	4	3	23	1	2	2	5	101	
TOTAL		510	95	13	618	195	45	13	253	47	15	12	75	946	

LEGEND: F.C. - Fully Capable

P.C. - Partially Capable

N.C. - Not Capable

CONSOLIDATED REPORT INCLUDING SPADINA, JUNCTION & YOUTH CENTRE

NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

ONTARIO REGION

TORONTO, Ontario Office

Period of Survey from... SEPTEMBER 2nd, 1947

Sex Section

to... SEPTEMBER 15th, 1947 Incl.

Sex MALE
 Record of Elapsed time from registration to placement.
 Age limit.....

AGE GROUPS	WORKING DAYS															WEEKS						MONTHS					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	3	4	2	3	4	5	6	Over 6				
Under 21	419	39	25	11	8	6	1	4	2				1	1	15	2	4	3					3				
21-44	1152	266	37	34	36	27	21	9	10	8	6	11	4	5	8	19	21	17	10			2					2
45-54	152	126	105	7	4	6	2	1	1				2	2	2	3	2	6	2	2	2	2					
55-64	113	58	3	1	1	3	1			1			1	2		1	4	3	2	1	1	1					1
Over 65	26	3	1	1		1	1							1		4	4	1									
	1862	492	171	54	49	43	26	14	13	9	6	12	5	11	11	25	35	30	14	3	3	3					

(b) making a special approach to employers to have them utilize the contribution of these persons.

4. Comments on older group:

A. 70 years of age and over

This group of persons is composed largely of those who have independent means or who are pensionable. A residue seek employment either because they do not qualify for pensions or they may desire to work even though it may not be essential for them to do so. Examples are fairly common of men who work as skilled artisans, and at professional or business vocations until well into the 70's and even 80's. However, it is very difficult to obtain employment for unskilled persons over 70 years of age.

The total number of persons in this age group in the Province of Ontario is estimated by the Ontario Department of Welfare to be approximately 170,000.

Of these, the number of persons in receipt of old age pensions at the present time (September, 1947) is approximately 69,000 or 40.5% of the total within this age group.

B. 65 to 69 years of age

The employment practices (e.g. pension plans) of many employers -- including the Dominion Government -- call for the compulsory retirement of their employees at 65 years of age. Where a pension plan has been in effect the financial needs of members of this age group may be adequately met. Others have personal savings for their advanced years.

However, a large number of persons in this age group have little or no financial resources to provide for their needs. The proportion requiring assistance is in all probability as high as in the "over 70" group -- 40%.

Various suggestions have been made for meeting the needs of this group. Those most frequently advanced are:

- (1) Lowering the pension age of men to 65 years and of women to 60 years.
- (2) A plan for comprehensive old age pensions on a contributory basis.

Pending the enactment of necessary legislation, neither of these plans will meet the financial needs of those currently unemployed who require assistance.

Two important items of information concerning this age group of male applicants were disclosed by the survey:

- (a) The large proportion of the "over 45" group made up of men 65 years and over.

	MEN 45 & over	MEN 65 & over	% 65 & over
Hamilton	586	323	55
Oshawa	216	87	40
Ottawa	642	197	31
Toronto	1646	873	53
Windsor	373	135	37
TOTALS	3463	1615	47

- (b) The larger proportions of "partially capable" and "not capable" men in this age group of 65 years and over:

646 (or 40%) of this group were deemed "partially capable" only;

180 (or 11%) of this group were deemed "not capable".

That is, less than one half the men were judged by the most generous evaluation to be fully capable of work in keeping with their years.

G. 45 to 64 years of age

The majority of men in the above age group -- and of women up to at least 60 years of age -- are deemed by those concerned with employment possibilities to be capable of being self-sustaining.

While the ageing process is not entirely a matter of years and some men are feeble at 60 years, yet most firms retain their employees until 65 years.

Although it is a fact that employers may retain men in their employ over the age of 45 -- in the majority of cases until 65 years of age -- yet it is equally true that their desires for new employees are for younger men. The expressed wishes of employers as indicated by their orders to Employment Offices or their "Help Wanted" advertisements in the daily press, stress their desires for younger employees. The "over 45" age group is almost ignored in such requirements (see graph later). PAGE 3

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P A R T T H R E E

COMMENTS CONCERNING OLDER WORKERS

1. Employment retards the ageing process:

The Nuffield Report on the Needs of Old People in England as reported in the London Times, January 15th, 1947, states:

"There is much evidence, moreover, that continuous occupation is a powerful means of delaying many of the effects of age."

One Canadian authority on this question states that between 1937 and 1945 while the number of admissions to all the Ontario hospitals (mental institutions) decreased 15%, yet the number of admissions for senile persons (elderly, mentally diseased persons) increased 66%. This increase in senility is believed to be a direct result of the large amount of unemployment of older persons during the depression, and this unemployment causing mental deterioration. On the other side of the picture we have the example of the Women's Patriotic League of Toronto, showing the effects of work therapy on older persons.

The Women's Patriotic League Emergency Work Shops, Toronto, opened in 1914 as a part of the war-time programme. It has, during the past 33 years, employed on an average about 40 women aged 60 and over. During this long history the League has employed various types of older women, but up to the present time they have not had a single case of senility, due they believe to the effect of the work therapy.

The Nuffield Foundation hopes to promote a survey to show the effects of employment on the health of elderly workers.

2. Assets of older workers:

Comments from employers to "Forty Plus" Clubs covering older worker. (These clubs were created on behalf of higher salaried men and women over 40 years of age who were unemployed).

- (1) They have good work habits and there is little or no absenteeism among them. We plan to keep them as long as we can. They have proven their worth.

- (2) Older men are not so addicted to late hours as are younger men. They have good habits of work and do not take advantage of others.
- (3) Older men who have experienced unemployment know that no position is secure and that a person must establish relationships with his employer which will secure perfect understanding.

3. Work record of older persons during World War II:

Age discrimination by Canadian employers disappeared during World War II. The Nation's war commitments demanded a large labour force. Also much of the Nation's industry was based on a cost-plus policy. All men were hired.

With the cessation of hostilities and the return of the profit motive in industry the older men were dismissed or not engaged. This is in large part responsible for the present surplus of elderly applicants for employment.

4. Balanced economy requires full use of all workers:

The growing proportion of the older persons to the total population and the increasing cost of their maintenance in retirement, make it important that they remain at work so long as they can make a worthwhile contribution to the creation of wealth. Dr. Carlson, Professor of Physiology, University of Chicago, says:

"Fifty years hence about 15 out of 100 people will be 65 years old. They will be better qualified for useful work than are the people of the same age today. It is sheer waste, bad biology and gross injustice to feed, house and clothe them in idleness. The only answer is useful work for pay, plus protection against the costs of sickness and accident."

Again he says:

"Keeping older workers in idleness wastes valuable human resources and contributes to degeneration of human society."

5. Some employers admit usefulness of older workers:

Nelson B. Sherrill Jr., General Manager, Home Insulating Division, Johns-Manville Corporation, said in an interview concerning this matter:

"Sales Management is hanging on tenaciously to certain pet requirements, particularly age requirements. I don't care whether you are partial to young or old men. I say it's poppycock. Of course, the great majority of sales executives have the "young-blood" complex. 'We need young blood in our business.' Of course you do. You need experience and maturity too. If a man is a failure at selling your product what does it get you to have him young, and if he does bring home the bacon, what do you care how long or how white his beard is? It is high time we all got around to setting up a real basis for selection instead of pet prejudices.

"I found young men were lured away by more profitable jobs. I advertised for men over 40 years. I was literally thrilled as I contemplated the brains, experience and breeding of the men who applied."

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PART FOUR

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Area conference to impress employers with problem and plan suitable action:

- (a) Invite representatives from employers' groups to consider the problem, including Toronto Board of Trade, Canadian Manufacturers' Association, Retail Merchants' Association, and representatives of distribution, finance, service industries, etc.
- (b) Urge each representative to secure action by members of his organization in providing employment for older people.
- (c) Follow up results; secure and, with permission, give publicity to the names of companies or employers' groups who agree to cooperate.

2. Conferences followed by intensive Employer Relations work:

A new type of Employer Relations work is required if we are to secure openings for men and women over 45 years of age. The emphasis must be not on how many orders may be secured, but on the type of orders obtained. The whole approach must be one of selling applicants to employers. Specific jobs must be sought for specific persons. That, in fact, is the manner in which many of the older applicants might be placed.

3. Vocational Guidance facilities for older persons:

We require a special counselling and placement service for older applicants:

- (a) First of all, the persons who really desire work must be ascertained.

Elderly persons who have contributed to the Unemployment Insurance Fund since its inception feel that they paid for unemployment benefits and are entitled to them. No amount of explanation by the Employment Officer serves to disillusion them from this fixed belief. In many cases these elderly persons state quite truthfully that they have a "weak back" or some other affliction and can do only "light work", knowing that there are not as many jobs of this nature available.

To repeat - the persons who want work must be ascertained. This will require real skill on the part of the Employment Officer. Certain officers have found a simple question at the beginning of the interview helpful. "Could you begin work to-day?" If the applicant hesitates or begins to state reasons why he will be forced to wait until a later date, he is deemed not very enthusiastic about a job. The ability to segregate those desiring work comes with experience.

- (b) As soon as the bona fide work applicants are ascertained they should be interviewed at length -- as long as is necessary to learn the complete story of their skills, abilities and interests. They will need to be coded into certain occupational groups.

(c) Many will need counselling.

Because they have become accustomed to think of work in terms of jobs in definite factories or shops they must be given guidance to think in new terms of work possibilities. They must become willing to experiment along new lines. It is a real challenge to the Employment Officers to do some thinking in order to give leadership to the men over 45 in their search for new job opportunities.

In the matter of obtaining employment for older persons exists a problem somewhat parallel to that of obtaining employment for youth.

In youth placements Vocational Guidance is one of the major needs. The youth has no work experience -- has no intimate knowledge of the requirements of many occupations and the advantages and disadvantages involved in them. He must relate his training, ability and interests to possible occupational fields and occupational levels. However, he is eager and prepared to adapt himself to his future.

The older person, too, requires Vocational Guidance. He, however, is very reluctant to admit that his potentialities are declining. He is not eager to make radical changes in his occupational life. The accountant, salesman or locomotive engineer is unwilling to admit that he can no longer keep pace or fit into the occupation to which he has given his life and in which he has been very successful and happy.

Providing guidance for such individuals is just as essential as for youth, but it requires a highly different approach and technique, and perhaps even more expert direction.

4. Opportunities for vocational training for older persons:

An important answer to this matter of work for older persons appears to be vocational training to fit them for new job opportunities.

Many men who have been skilled in some occupation find it impossible to carry on in such work. For example, the railroads have a very high physical standard for locomotive engineers, and rightly so. These engineers are replaced while comparatively young, and with many years of potential earning power and work ability still untapped.

In the national economy, provision should be made to give suitable vocational training to fit older persons into new fields suitable to their age.

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