

Older Workers (1956)

OLDER WORKERS IN THE MIAMI LABOR MARKET

**A SUMMARY,
AS APPLIED TO METROPOLITAN MIAMI,
OF THE OLDER WORKER STUDY**

**FLORIDA INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION
FLORIDA STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE**

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IN THE MIAMI LABOR MARKET

A Summary,
As Applied to Metropolitan Miami,
of the Older Worker Study

Sponsored by
The U. S. Department of Labor.

Prepared by
R. O. Beckman
Consultant on Older Workers

FLORIDA INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION
FLORIDA STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

Tallahassee, Florida

1956



**FLORIDA INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION
FLORIDA STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE**

**AFFILIATED WITH
UNITED STATES EMPLOYMENT SERVICE**

Tallahassee

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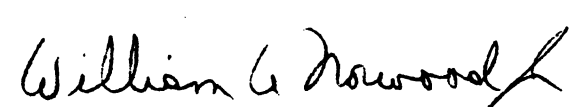
FOREWORD

The employment of older persons is becoming of greater and greater concern to the general public and to all of the organizations and governmental units involved in their welfare. The number of older people who are working or seeking work has greatly increased above former generations, both in quantity and in proportion to younger workers. This has resulted from the rapid strides in sanitation, hygiene and medical care which have greatly extended the life expectancy and improved the health of American workers. Employment opportunities for older workers, however, have not kept pace with this increase with the result that there is much unemployment of older persons in spite of the full employment and high demand for workers which this country enjoys today. Any economic reverses would undoubtedly aggravate this condition and result in serious social problems unless measures are taken to forestall this situation.

In an effort to learn more of the nature and extent of the problem and to develop methods of solving it, the U. S. Department of Labor in cooperation with several State Employment Services conducted an Older Worker Study during 1956 in seven American cities. One of these studies was conducted in Miami by the Florida State Employment Service Division of the Florida Industrial Commission. The national results are included in the publications "Older Worker Adjustment to Labor Market Practices", and "Counseling and Placement Services for Older Workers," both published by the U. S. Department of Labor in September 1956. The present publication is an effort to disseminate in non-technical terms the findings and conclusions of the Miami portion of the study. It was prepared by Mr. R. O. Beckman, who was engaged to supervise the Miami study and prepare the reports on it. Mr. Beckman is an independent personnel consultant with extensive experience in private industry and a writer on problems of aging. We would like to extend to Mr. Beckman our appreciation for his thorough and conscientious service on this project.

Basically the study was an effort to learn more about the characteristics of unemployed people over 45 in comparison with younger unemployed people and employed older people to find out why some older people have difficulty in obtaining and holding employment and to develop techniques to help them become re-established in the working force. It is published for the use of employers, Industrial Commission personnel, organizations serving the aged, and the general public.


James T. Vocelle, Chairman
Florida Industrial Commission


William U. Norwood, Jr., Director
Florida State Employment Service

NOTE

The numbers in parentheses () appearing in the narrative text refer to the Bibliography of supplementary reference material appearing at the end of this report.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
1. INTRODUCTION - THE NEED FOR DEPENDABLE FACTS	1
Purpose of the Study	1
Procedure Followed in the Survey	2
2. IMPACT ON METROPOLITAN MIAMI OF ITS MATURE POPULATION	3
The Economy of the Area	3
Disproportionate Increase of Older Persons	5
Chart 1 - U. S. Population 45 and Over Increasing More Rapidly than Total Population	*5&6
Chart 2 - Percentage Increases in Greater Miami Population Aged 15 and Over, 1940-1955	*5&6
Table I - Percentage Distribution of Available Labor Force Population by Age (Based on Population Aged 15 and Over, Dade County)	6
Under-Utilization and Over-Supply of Workers Over 45	7
Table II - Percentage Distribution Over and Under Age 45 of Employed Workers and Job Applicants in Major Occupational Groups, U. S. and Dade County	8
Table III - Percentage Distribution of Employed Workers 45 and Over by Area and Sex	9
3. EMPLOYMENT PATTERNS: THE LOCAL LABOR FORCE	9
Distribution by Occupation and Industry	9
Distribution by Size of Establishment	10
Table IV - Percentage Distribution of Employment by Age and Size of Firm in Metropolitan Miami	11
Stability of the Local Labor Force	11
Table V - Annual Turnover Rates by Industry and Sex for Year Ending June 30, 1955, Metropolitan Miami	12
Table VI - Annual Turnover Rates by Age for Year Ending June 30, 1955, Metropolitan Miami	13
Table VII - Number and Percentages of Employed Workers Under and Over 45 by Length of Service, Metropolitan Miami	14
Employer Personnel Records Incomplete	15
4. CURRENT CHARACTERISTICS OF OLDER JOB SEEKERS	15
The Typical Miami Applicant	15
What the Survey Disclosed About Him	16
Chart 3 - Frequency of Unemployment Multiplies with Advancing Age	*17&18
Chart 4 - Persons of 45 and Over More Frequently Unemployed for Longer Periods	*17&18

*Charts are between page numbers listed.

	<u>Page</u>
Table VIII - Percentage Comparison by Age Groups of Length of Service of Employed Population with Duration of Last Job of Unemployed Applicants in Metropolitan Miami	22
5. FACTORS AFFECTING EMPLOYMENT OF OLDER WORKERS	23
Employer Practice and Policy	23
Chart 5 - Miami Employers Tend to Limit Hiring of Workers Over 45 Because -	*24&25
Why Employers are Reluctant to Hire Older Workers	25
Arbitrary Age Restrictions	25
Chart 6 - Percentages of Job Openings Specifying Upper Age Limits Set by Employers	*26&27
Physical Fitness and Performance	26
Opinions of Miami Employers	27
Absenteeism and Illness	31
Personal Traits of Older Workers	32
Pensions and Insurance Costs	33
Table IX - Percentage Distribution of Employment by Age and Pension Plan Coverage, Metropolitan Miami	34
Table X - Percentage Distribution of Employment by Pension Plan Coverage, Industry, Major Occupational Group and Size of Firm, Metropolitan Miami	34
Collective Bargaining Agreements	38
Placement by the Public Employment Service	39
Chart 7 - Intensive Effort to Place Miami Older Workers Pays Off	*40&41
Employment Problems of the Over -65 Group	42
Public Attitudes Toward Aging	45
6. SUMMARY FINDINGS OF THE OLDER WORKER STUDY	45
7. WAYS AND MEANS OF INCREASING EMPLOYMENT OF MATURE WORKERS	53
What the Employer Can Do	53
What the Employment Service Can Do	55
What the Community Can Do	57

Bibliography

*Charts are between page numbers listed.

1. INTRODUCTION - THE NEED FOR DEPENDABLE FACTS

Purpose of the Study

Two kinds of barriers block the efforts of mature men and women who are seeking employment today. The first is an objective one, of which the quantitative significance must be ascertained by facts and figures of employer experience in utilizing workers over age 45. The second is subjective or psychological and is based on human attitudes toward older persons.

The Older Worker Study initiated by the U. S. Department of Labor was primarily directed at the objective barrier, to obtain information of the extent to which older workers are employed, and to ascertain the importance of their productive capacity, physical fitness, accidents, illness and absenteeism, and of pensions and insurance in the formulation of hiring policies. It was also concerned with appraising the employability of older unemployed workers and with improving the facilities of public employment offices to provide them with better service. The survey necessarily also concerned itself with psychological attitudes toward age which pervade our entire culture and economy.

Some earlier data had been gathered about older workers, but it appeared to contain errors and limitations and relied unduly upon opinion. It was therefore believed that a more exhaustive study would show whether the employment of older workers is economically sound. More specific information was needed to answer questions such as these: To what extent are older persons, in good health, able, and wanting to work, being denied this opportunity? What concrete evidence is there as to performance, productivity, absenteeism, and other characteristics of such workers? What are the effects of pension costs and compulsory retirement? To what extent is loss of productivity and manpower wastage caused by the idleness of older workers? As applied to the Miami area and to Florida, to what extent is the increasing older population being adequately utilized in economic growth?

Congressional appropriation was obtained for research on employment practices and exhaustive studies of older worker employment were then launched through the state employment services in seven cities in the country. These were Philadelphia, Worcester, Detroit, Minneapolis, Los Angeles, Seattle, and Miami. Specialized studies were also undertaken at the headquarters of the U. S. Department of Labor in Washington.

In order to clarify the approach to the problem, an "older worker" was defined as any person who encounters difficulty in getting or keeping a job principally because of his age or of characteristics ordinarily associated with age. In practice it is found that such difficulty frequently starts at about age 45 and the survey was therefore centered on comparisons of workers over and under that age.

The major project undertaken in the seven cities mentioned had three aspects. Phase I was concerned with "job patterns" in industry and sought to determine where, at what jobs, and at what age employed men and women were at work in the areas selected. (13) Phase II concerned itself with individual work patterns and characteristics of the unemployed as a source of labor supply. (13) Phase III was a research and service project concerned with ways and means of placing the available supply of older workers in the local employment market. This called for an intensified effort to find jobs through the local employment office for a random sample of 400 persons over 45 and a comparison of these placement results with those of normal placement routine. (3)

In addition to the compilation of a large volume of statistical data for the U. S. Department of Labor and the Congress, thus laying a basis for corrective action, the survey provided specific information about the employment patterns of the Miami area. Facts regarding local employment by industry and occupation in relation to age and as to the potential of unemployed persons, many of them in-migrants, are especially relevant in view of the amazing growth of that area and the abnormal increase in its older population.

Procedure Followed in the Survey

During the summer of 1955, a pre-test or pilot study of older workers was conducted by the Employment Service in Minneapolis. The basic purpose was to try out procedures, forms, and methods of study in developing employment data. Particular attention was given to Phases I and II; lesser attention was given to the development of placement techniques. The preliminary project helped the Bureau of Employment Security to plan studies to be undertaken elsewhere.

The Miami project involved the cooperation of 727 employing establishments which supplied information regarding a random sample of 26,932 persons employed by them during the year ending June 30, 1955, together with a statement of employment practice as applied to older workers. This was done largely by mail. The sample taken excluded workers in small establishments not covered by unemployment insurance.

In addition, 2,000 unemployed applicants were interviewed at the Miami employment office by a specially hired staff to obtain detailed information about their personal characteristics and past employment. One thousand of these were under 45; another thousand, 45 and over. Phase III of the project required far lengthier interviews with 400 unemployed persons over 45 to obtain their complete work history for the preceding 15 years.

The project was undertaken by the Florida Industrial Commission under the direction of an outside personnel consultant. He was assisted by a temporary staff and, in carrying out Phase III, by designated regular personnel of the Miami office. Statistical tabulating cards were punched for each of the employed and unemployed workers studied. The Chief of Reports and Analysis of the Industrial Commission in Tallahassee directed the tabulation of the manifold statistical data required and undertook its validation from the professional statistical viewpoint.

The present study is the first exhaustive project of its kind in the Miami area. It makes available a great deal of objective evidence as to the utilization and employment characteristics of the older employed population of the area and paves the way for improved service to employers and older applicants by the State Employment Service.

. IMPACT ON METROPOLITAN MIAMI OF ITS MATURE POPULATION

The Economy of the Area

The metropolitan Miami area, comprising mostly of Dade County at the southeast tip of Florida, is the fastest growing large community in the United States. It has a population of more than 700,000. This is a three-fold increase since 1940 and places the area in twenty-fifth place in population in the country. This growth is due largely to the influx of persons from other states, especially of those in the mature age brackets.

The area's largest city is Miami proper with a 1955 population of 259,035. Next in size are Miami Beach with 51,000, Hialeah with 43,000, and Coral Gables with 29,000 persons. Some 40 per cent of the entire population resides in 21 other small municipalities and in unincorporated areas of the county.

Largely dependent for some 30 years or more on tourism, the area has, during the past ten years, developed a far more diversified economy. In 1940 the tourist-dominated trade and service industries accounted for 64 per cent of total employment, but growth of other industries reduced this to less than 50 per cent by December 1955. There is now

little seasonal variation between summer and winter employment levels in service enterprises and in wholesale and retail trade. The extra demand for temporary seasonal employment in these establishments is met largely by in-migrants.

An important factor contributing to Miami's growth is its geographical position which results in extensive air traffic with Latin-American countries.

Retail sales for the Greater Miami area reached an all-time peak of more than one and one-quarter billion dollars in 1955. They are substantially above the national per capita average for large metropolitan markets. Bank deposits increased 112 per cent in nine years as compared to 41 per cent for the nation.

The area leads other Florida cities in the number (but not in production) of manufacturing establishments, but at least three-fourths of them employ less than 25 workers. The value added by manufacture is more than three-fourths of a billion. The Miami area has surged to first place in Florida in payroll and total of manufacturing employees in recent years. Aside from the airlines, department and chain stores, newspapers and a few large hotels and factories, there are few large employers, however.

Of the employed workers in the area, a third are found in wholesale and retail trade, and a fifth in service industries. More than a seventh are employed in transportation and public utilities, most of them by airlines; about the same proportion are working in manufacturing industries in which apparel, food and kindred products, and metal products are produced for the most part.

Wage rates have hardly kept pace with the increased demand for workers or with compensation in many other parts of the country. This is due largely to competition for jobs from persons who flock to Florida in the hope of finding employment. The continued influx of older persons moving into the area to settle there and of winter visitors trying to find employment introduces considerable instability in the local labor supply.

It is conservatively estimated that the State of Florida will have five million people by 1960 and that the population of Greater Miami will then be one million. The population figures give the real jist of the Miami story and authoritative business analysts predict that business in the state and the area will move ahead faster than the national average in the years ahead.

Disproportionate Increase of Older Persons

A continued business boom for some years to come with a constant inflow of older than average workers introduces an unusual factor into the employment situation in the area. Merchants, manufacturers and other business enterprises interested in developing the area and encouraging persons to settle there little realize the change that is taking place in the age of its labor supply. The percentage in Dade County of those over 45 was 27 per cent in 1940, 28 per cent in 1950 and then jumped to 31.1 per cent in the special census of 1955.

U. S. Census reports show a constant increase since 1900 in the ratio of the persons of 45 and over to the total population of the U. S., (13) as will be seen by referring to Chart 1.

The median age of all persons in the U. S. in 1950 was 30.1 years. The Miami city median in 1950 was already 35.9 years, third highest in the U. S. for cities of 100,000 or more, and surpassed only by Pasadena and San Francisco.

Editorial Research Reports recently commented as follows on the increasing percentage of older persons in this country: "The proportion of the total population age 45 or over rose from 18 per cent in 1900 to 28 per cent in 1950, and the Census Bureau estimates that the ratio will climb to nearly 34 per cent by 1975 and then spurt to about 43 per cent by 1985." The Miami area is already ahead of such a forecast.

For the next ten years there will be a shortage of available younger workers in the nation. According to the Census Bureau only 400,000 more persons will be added to the 25-44 year group by 1960. On the other hand, two million persons will be added to the 45-64 age group. This growing pinch for younger manpower on the national scene will be intensified in Florida because of the presence of the large number of older job seekers.

On the basis of a total possible labor force, that is to say of all persons over 15 years of age, the percentage of persons over 45 in Dade County is now 42 per cent. This represents an increase since 1940 of this group of 197.3 per cent as compared to an increase in the entire population over 15 of 141.7 per cent.

The excessive growth of the local age groups over age 15 since 1940 is shown in Chart 2 and in Table I, which follow. Percentages of all age groups over 45 show a consistent increase.

TABLE I

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF AVAILABLE
LABOR FORCE POPULATION BY AGE (BASED ON POPULATION
AGED 15 AND OVER, DADE COUNTY)

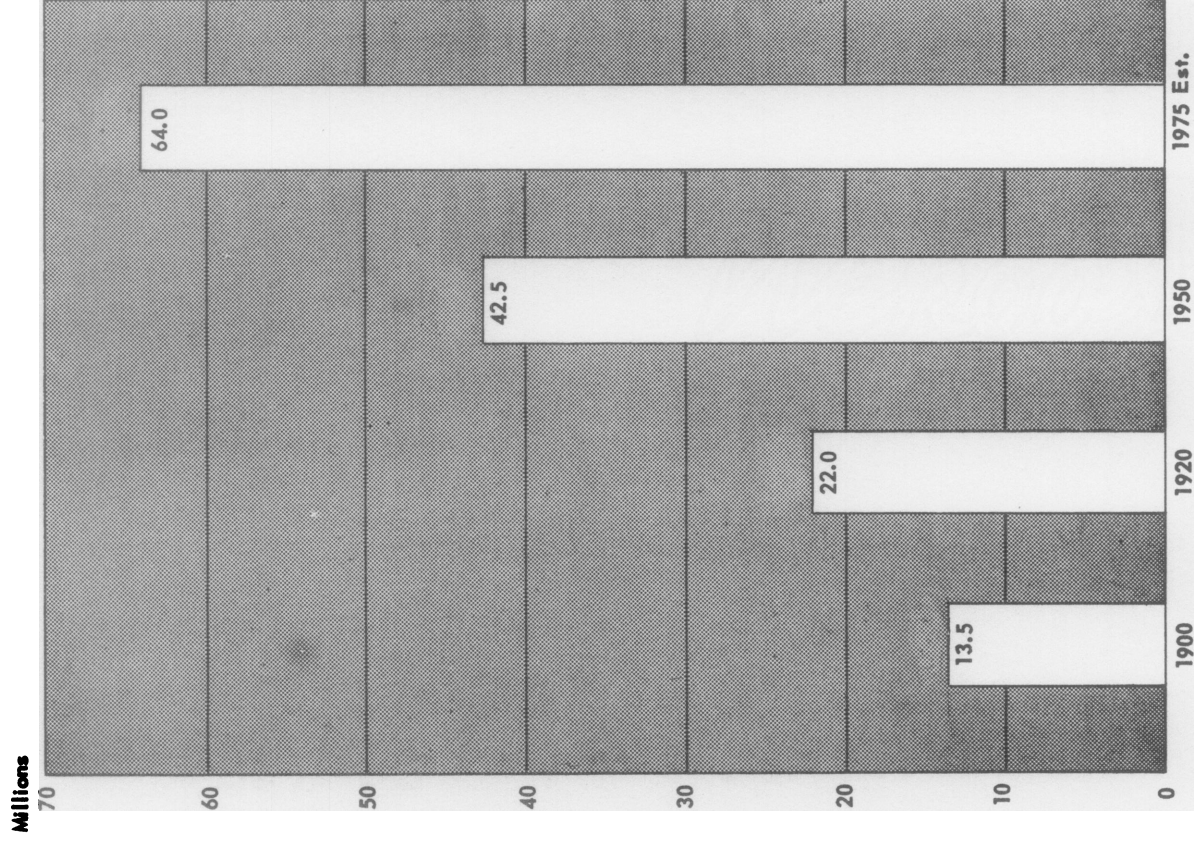
<u>YEAR</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>15-24</u>	<u>25-34</u>	<u>35-44</u>	<u>45-54</u>	<u>55-64</u>	<u>65 & Over</u>
<u>1940</u>	215,523 100.0	42,896 19.9	52,346 24.3	46,737 21.7	34,073 15.8	22,232 10.3	17,239 8.0
Per cent 45 and over - 34.1							
<u>1950</u>	387,526 100.0	61,097 15.8	87,925 22.7	85,247 22.0	68,231 17.6	47,271 12.2	37,755 9.7
Per cent 45 and over - 39.5							
<u>1955</u>	520,905 100.0	75,469 14.5	110,659 21.2	116,144 22.3	93,566 18.0	66,486 12.8	58,581 11.2
Per cent 45 and over - 42.0							
PER CENT OF INCREASE BY AGE GROUPS SINCE 1940	141.7	75.9	111.2	148.5	174.6	199.1	239.8

PER CENT OF INCREASE
SINCE 1940 OF PERSONS
45 AND OVER - 197.3

SOURCE: U. S. CENSUS REPORTS

CHART 1

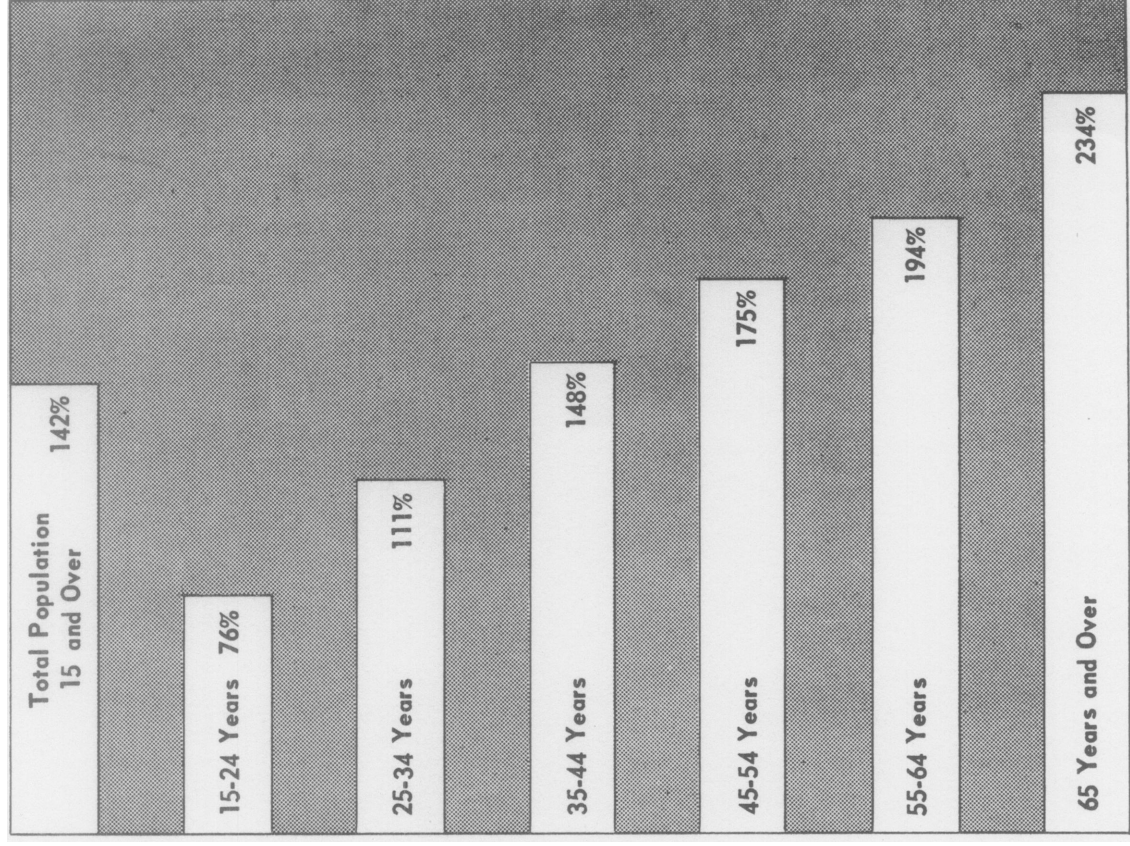
U. S. POPULATION 45 AND OVER INCREASING MORE RAPIDLY
THAN TOTAL POPULATION



SOURCE: U. S. Bureau of the Census

CHART 2

PERCENTAGE INCREASES IN GREATER MIAMI POPULATION AGED 15
AND OVER, 1940-1955



SOURCE: U. S. Census Reports

Under-Utilization and Over-Supply of Workers Over 45

Table II was set up to compare the percentages of manpower over and under age 45 by major occupations for the U. S. and for metropolitan Miami. The first two horizontal rows of figures are obtained from the last census of occupations in 1950. The third row shows the age distribution of the Older Worker Study sample as of 1955, but includes only workers in establishments of eight or more employees covered by unemployment compensation. The bottom row gives percentages showing the age distribution by occupation of job applicants at the State Employment Office. Comparable figures regarding applicants are reported by private employment agencies.

Inspection of this table discloses that in 1950 there was four per cent less employment for persons of 45 and over in Dade County than in the U. S. as a whole. In 1955 "covered" employment was more than six per cent lower. This despite the county's excessive population of persons of 45 plus, which is now 42 per cent of all persons over 15 years of age. Under-employment of older workers is found in all major occupational fields except sales. The classification of semi-skilled workers reported under "covered" employees is open to question as a result of which the percentage shown is probably too high. Since the Older Worker Study excluded many executive and professional persons who were not "covered" by unemployment insurance it is likely that the Dade County Census figures in Table II are more applicable to that group. Their numbers, however, in the entire labor force are relatively small.

Table II therefore indicates: (1) that the local area is not employing a proportionate share of older workers as compared with the rest of the country and (2) that local applicants for employment constitute an older group than the employed workers.

Further confirmation of the under-employment of older persons in Dade County is found in the 1950 census reports when the percentages of employed persons in the U. S. and the county are compared by age groups and sex. Male employment here is shown to be under the national average in every age category. The discrepancy gradually increases in relation to the national figures after age 40; it is most pronounced at 55-59 years. To bring the level of employment for men of 45 and over up to the standards which apply elsewhere appears to indicate added local employment of at least fifteen per cent of the older group.

In the case of employed women, only one-third as numerous as men, relatively more are employed in Dade County between the ages of 20 and 50, especially in the 30's, than for the country as a whole. After that age employment falls below the national average also.

TABLE II
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OVER AND UNDER AGE 45
OF EMPLOYED WORKERS AND JOB APPLICANTS IN

MAJOR OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS
U.S. AND DADE COUNTY

Area and Age Groups	Per Cent of Total							
	All Occ.	Prof. Manag.	Cler- ical	Sales	Service	Agric.	Skilled	Un- skilled
<u>U.S. Employed</u>								
<u>Population-19501/</u>								
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Under 45 years	63.0	58.7	76.2	67.7	58.1	58.0	61.1	66.3
45 years and over	37.0	41.3	23.8	32.3	41.9	42.0	38.9	33.7
<u>Dade County</u>								
<u>Employed-19501/</u>								
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Under 45 years	66.6	56.8	77.6	63.2	68.2	62.7	66.6	71.7
45 years and over	33.4	43.2	22.4	36.8	31.8	37.3	33.4	28.3
<u>"Covered" Employees-19552/</u>								
Total	100	100	100	100	100	-*	100	100
Under 45 years	69.3	64.1	77.3	61.7	64.7	-	64.8	78.9
45 years and over	30.7	35.9	22.7	38.3	35.3	-	35.2	21.1
<u>Unemployed Workers-19563/</u>								
Total	100	100	100	100	100	-*	100	100
Under 45 years	48.2	46.3	60.7	48.0	36.8	-	37.8	63.3
45 years and over	51.8	53.7	39.3	52.0	63.2	-	62.2	36.7

Sources: 1/ - U.S. Census Reports
2/ - O.W.S. Survey, Phase I
3/ - O.W.S. Survey, Phase II

* Not included in O.W.S. Survey

The proportion of employed workers of 45 and over in metropolitan Miami is also found to be less than in the six other areas in which the Older Worker Study was conducted as of last year. The percentage distribution of workers over 45 in the seven areas is summarized in Table III.

Table III
Percentage Distribution of Employed Workers 45 and Over
By Area and Sex

Sex	All Areas	Detroit	Los Angeles	Miami	Minn. - St. Paul	Philadelphia	Seattle	Worcester
Total								
M & F	34.5	33.9	32.0	30.6	34.2	41.8	35.0	39.1
Total								
Male	36.4	36.6	33.5	32.2	34.2	44.8	35.6	40.0
Total								
Female	30.0	24.9	28.4	26.5	44.0	35.4	33.8	37.0

The only exception in the foregoing table showing less employment of older workers in the Miami area is in the case of Detroit, where fewer older women were employed than in Miami. Detailed statistical tables dealing with the employed and unemployed workers in Miami and other survey cities will be found in reference (13) in the Bibliography.

3. EMPLOYMENT PATTERNS: THE LOCAL LABOR FORCE

Distribution by Occupation and Industry

There were about 155,000 persons employed in metropolitan Miami during 1955 in establishments with eight or more workers covered by state unemployment insurance or railroad retirement. In addition to these another 75,000 workers are employed in small "non-covered" establishments, largely in trade, personal or government service.

The covered workers are distributed in the following percentages among major occupational fields:

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Per Cent</u>
Professional	5.2
Managerial	7.3
Clerical	18.3
Sales	8.7
Service	15.7
Skilled	19.8
Semi-Skilled	11.5
Unskilled	9.6

These percentages are much higher than the proportion on a national basis of clerical, skilled and service workers. If non-covered workers were included, the professional and managerial groups would also be higher than elsewhere. There is a noticeably small percentage of semi-skilled workers in the area, because of the small number of factory workers. Nearly 70 per cent of all local workers are men.

The distribution of covered workers by the industries in which they were employed is as follows:

<u>Industry</u>	<u>Per Cent</u>
Construction	13.0
Manufacturing	14.0
Durable Goods	6.8
Non-Durable	7.2
Transportation, Comm. & Utilities	15.8
Trade	30.6
Wholesale	8.2
Retail	22.4
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	6.2
Service	20.2

Clerical and unskilled workers show a relative decrease in numbers as age increases but in most other lines their proportion increases up to the 45-54 age bracket, after which it falls off sharply. Nearly 60 per cent of all workers were aged from 25 to 44. The distribution under and over age 45 has already been shown in Table II.

As in the case of age distribution by occupation, the highest percentages of employed persons in every industrial classification are found in age brackets under 45 years. In the service occupations the largest group (30 per cent) of workers are aged 35-44. The largest group in transportation is from 25-34 because of young airline personnel.

Distribution by Size of Establishment

Table IV summarizes the age distribution of employment in relation to the size of the firm. It is noteworthy that 44.1 per cent of all covered workers are employed in firms with from 8 to 49 employees. Since the first of this year establishments with four or more workers have been covered by unemployment insurance, but these were not included in the study. If workers in smaller and non-covered establishments were

included in the table it is apparent that far more than half of all persons working in the Greater Miami area are employed in establishments with less than 50 workers. Something more than a fifth of the covered workers are employed in firms with from 100 to 449 workers. Firms with from 50 to 99 employees are close behind with 18 per cent.

Table IV
Percentage Distribution of Employment by Age and Size of Firm
in Metropolitan Miami

Age Group	Size of Firm						
	All Firms	8-49 Employees	50-99 Employees	100-499 Employees	500-999 Employees	1000-4999 Employees	5000 & More
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Under 25	11.7	10.4	13.4	13.5	8.5	11.7	8.3
25-34	28.0	26.4	27.2	27.7	26.5	33.7	39.1
35-44	29.6	29.6	29.0	29.5	27.7	29.7	35.4
45-54	19.3	20.5	18.8	18.4	26.2	16.8	12.9
55-64	8.9	10.2	8.2	9.0	8.3	7.1	3.5
65 & over	2.5	2.9	3.4	1.9	2.8	1.0	.8
Total							
45 & over	30.7	33.6	30.2	29.3	27.3	24.9	17.2

Source: Table 8, O. W. S. Employment Patterns, 1955

It is interesting that only in the case of establishments with less than 50 workers do the percentages of workers show a steady increase with rising age brackets. In the firms with 8-49 workers one-third of the workers are 45 or over. The larger establishments definitely appear to place more of an accent on youth than do the smaller firms. The percentage of older workers decreases with the size of the firm. One-third of all employees of firms having 1000-4999 workers are in the 25-34 year age bracket as compared with only a fourth of all over 45.

Stability of the Local Labor Force

A low rate of employee turnover and an extended length of service on the part of a given work force are important goals of personnel administration. The cost of replacing a worker may run up to several hundred dollars. Among the items included in the cost of turnover are:

Loss of production time.
 Cost of training and added labor.
 Spoilage of material.
 Increased overhead and administrative expenses.
 Higher unemployment compensation premiums.
 Higher accident insurance rates.

The Older Worker Study disclosed that turnover rates in the Miami metropolitan area are abnormally higher than elsewhere. This condition appears to be due to job competition in a rapidly expanding industrial economy and inadequate methods of employee selection, particularly of workers new to the area.

A net turnover rate is obtained by dividing the number of workers hired or separated (whichever is smaller) by the number of employees on the payroll. No turnover figures are available on a national basis except for manufacturing industry in which the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics has in recent years shown employee turnover of around 36 per cent a year. This can be compared with a Miami turnover rate of 126 for manufacturing industries, more than three times the national figures. For all industries the Miami rate averages 107 as shown by the Older Worker Study.

The local turnover rates by industry and by sex appear in the summary Table V which follows. The construction and service industries have the highest rate of personnel change due in part to seasonal employment. The low figures shown for the transportation industry are due to the greater stability of employment with large airlines, utilities and common carriers which stress greater care in selecting and retaining workers.

Table V
Annual Turnover Rates by Industry and Sex for Year Ending
June 30, 1955, Metropolitan Miami

Industry	Hiring Rate	Separation Rate
All Industries	113	107
Construction	149	158
Manufacturing	128	126
Transportation, Communica- tion & Public Utilities	32	29
Trade	120	110
Finance, Real Estate & Insurance	61	54
Service	142	128
Sex: Male	112	108
Female	123	113

Source: Table 1a, O. W. S. Turnover Series, 1955.

With reference to the variation in turnover by occupation followed, the Older Worker Study report disclosed that the lowest rate occurred among the professional and managerial group, 27, increased to 73 in the clerical group, 82 in the skilled trades and 100 in the sales field, 117 in semi-skilled occupations, then jumped to 171 in service jobs and 173 in unskilled work.

The over-all turnover rate of workers in metropolitan Miami, 107, was found to be twice as high as the average of the seven cities with which the Older Worker Study was concerned. It was lowest in Philadelphia at 19. Detroit and Worcester averaged about 35. Seattle showed turnover of 86 and Los Angeles of 78. The rate was high at 80 even for the 45-64 age group as compared with a seven city average of 36 for older workers.

In the case of firms with from 8 to 499 employees the turnover rates range from 113 to 133, but as the firm size rises to 1000 or more workers, the figures drop to a separation rate of 28. Women show a more frequent change of job than men. The low rate for larger firms is apparently attributable to more careful selection methods and to pension and benefit plans which tend to encourage longer service on the part of employees. This is further demonstrated by the fact that turnover among workers in the area under pension plans is less than half that of workers not so covered.

How does the turnover of employed workers age 45 and over compare with that under that age? The older worker study disclosed that the stability of Miami workers in holding their jobs increases up to the age of 65. Separation rates are lower for older than for younger workers and generally decrease with years of service.

The turnover rates at various ages are shown in the following Table VI, which indicates that separations under the age of 25 are more than twice as numerous as those from 45 to 64.

Table VI
Annual Turnover Rates by Age for Year Ending
June 30, 1955, Metropolitan Miami

Age Group	Hiring Rate	Separation Rate
All Ages	113	107
Under 25	182	167
25-34	116	112
35-44	94	91
45-54	90	85
55-64	81	75
Total 45-64	87	80

Source: Table 1a, O.W.S. Turnover Series, 1955.

High turnover and fluctuations in the number of employees on the payroll markedly increase the cost of premiums paid by many local employers for unemployment insurance. A firm with a \$200,000 annual payroll, for example, can save more than \$5,000 a year if its employment is stabilized to a point where it pays only .2% for premiums as compared with a maximum rate of 2.7% of payroll.

Statistical tables compiled in the survey reveal that the average length of service of employed workers in the area aged 45 and over is markedly greater than that of younger workers. This trend is summarized in Table VII.

Table VII
Number and Percentages of Employed Workers Under and Over 45
by Length of Service, Metropolitan Miami

Total		Less Than 1 Year Service		1-4 Years Service		5 or More Years Service	
No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<u>Under 45</u>							
91,551	100	33,360	36.7	36,641	40.0	21,541	23.7
<u>45 and Over</u>							
40,578	100	9,999	24.5	13,717	34.0	16,852	41.5

Source: Table 6, O.W.S. Employment Patterns

Of the third of the workers in the employed group having less than one year's service, 77 per cent were under 45 years of age. Of all workers having 10 or more years of service, 57 per cent were 45 and over. The separation rate for workers employed for less than one year reached the high figure of 280. For those with 10 or more years of service it was only 7.

An exception to the correlation between age, length of service and separation rates is found in the turnover of persons aged 55-64 who had been employed for more than a year. Here the separation rate is higher than for the 45-54 age bracket. Just why this occurs is difficult to understand, but it raises a question as to whether some employers may lay off workers over 55 when reduction in force is necessary.

Other survey tables showing the length of service of employed workers in relation to the size of the employing firm disclose a definite trend for larger firms to have a larger representation of workers employed for 10 or more years. The percentages of long service workers over 45 are also much higher in large than small firms. This is doubtless due to the stabilizing influence of pensions and to the lesser tendency of older workers to change their employment.

Employer Personnel Records Incomplete

Considerable difficulty was experienced in obtaining data from many establishments as to dates of employment and separation, reason for separation, nature of work performed and in particular, age. While most of the large firms kept individual personnel records, this was only true of about half of the firms having from 8-49 workers. It was especially difficult to obtain information from construction firms.

Many firms maintain an individual record of deductions for social security with which in some cases a record of personal data is combined. In some firms the only record of who was employed was kept on the payroll or on check stubs. One of the largest employers in the area has no central record of who is employed and but a fragmentary record in the various divisions of the enterprise.

The fact that nearly half of the establishments included in the sample kept no personnel record showing their employees' ages made it necessary to obtain the ages of some 5,400 employed workers from the Social Security Administration in Baltimore.

One personnel director commented on the lack of adequate personnel records in the area by saying: "Every employer keeps a precise record of sales, of cash, and of stock and equipment, but many firms appear to overlook the equal importance of recording the facts about their investment in the manpower needed to realize a profit on their other assets."

Data was requested of employers as to the reasons for leaving of those separated during the year's employment surveyed. Since few establishments kept such a record, no authoritative data could be obtained as to quits and discharges, especially in relation to the age of workers.

4. CURRENT CHARACTERISTICS OF OLDER JOB SEEKERS

The Typical Miami Applicant

The typical person applying for work at the Miami Employment Service is likely to be a man in his 40's with one or two dependents. He has had

somewhat less than a high school education and has been in the area for less than two years. He came to South Florida because he likes the climate and hoped he could find work in the course of the spectacular business boom which has been under way there for several years. This unemployed worker is more likely to have worked in skilled or service than in office or sales occupations, but has made one or two changes during his life in his line of work or in the industry in which he was employed. He has had relatively little unemployment during the past 15 years and held his longest job for several years. He has earned from \$60 to \$80 per week but has no other source of income.

As he approaches the 50's he finds that unless he is firmly established with one employer he has more and more trouble in getting satisfactory employment. Spells of unemployment grow longer. Although his health and capacity for work are adequate, and in spite of a good employment record, he discovers that employers hire younger applicants. He is inclined to seek work by applying directly to employers. Often he does not register with the public employment service until he is forced to apply for unemployment compensation. This he is increasingly likely to do as he grows older.

This is the composite picture presented by extensive data compiled from interviews conducted with 2,000 unemployed men and women of all ages in the course of the Older Worker Study at the Miami office of the Florida State Employment Service during the winter of 1955-56. The 2,000 were questioned as to their work experience during the three preceding years. In addition, 425 unemployed workers over age 45 were interviewed in greater detail to obtain their work history records from 1941 to 1955.

Employment conditions were satisfactory throughout the nation from 1953-55 with some unemployment in certain areas in 1954. In Miami, also the three-year period was characterized by a high level of employment. The over-all employment record of the 2,000 unemployed was affected by conditions existing elsewhere since nearly half of them had been in Greater Miami for less than one year.

What the Survey Disclosed About Him

The facts about local jobseekers may be summarized as follows:

A. The individual worker's problem of maintaining steady employment grows with advancing age.

1. The length of time the applicants were currently out of work bears a definite relationship to their age. The older the applicant, the longer is he likely to be unemployed. This period

increases more or less steadily to the age of 64, and at 65 and over grows markedly longer.

2. The increasing extent of unemployment with age is shown by the fact that the proportion of time lost by the group of 425 through unemployment during the last six years was nearly double the proportion they lost during the entire 15 years. In other words, the same group of persons had substantially more difficulty recently in finding work than they formerly did.

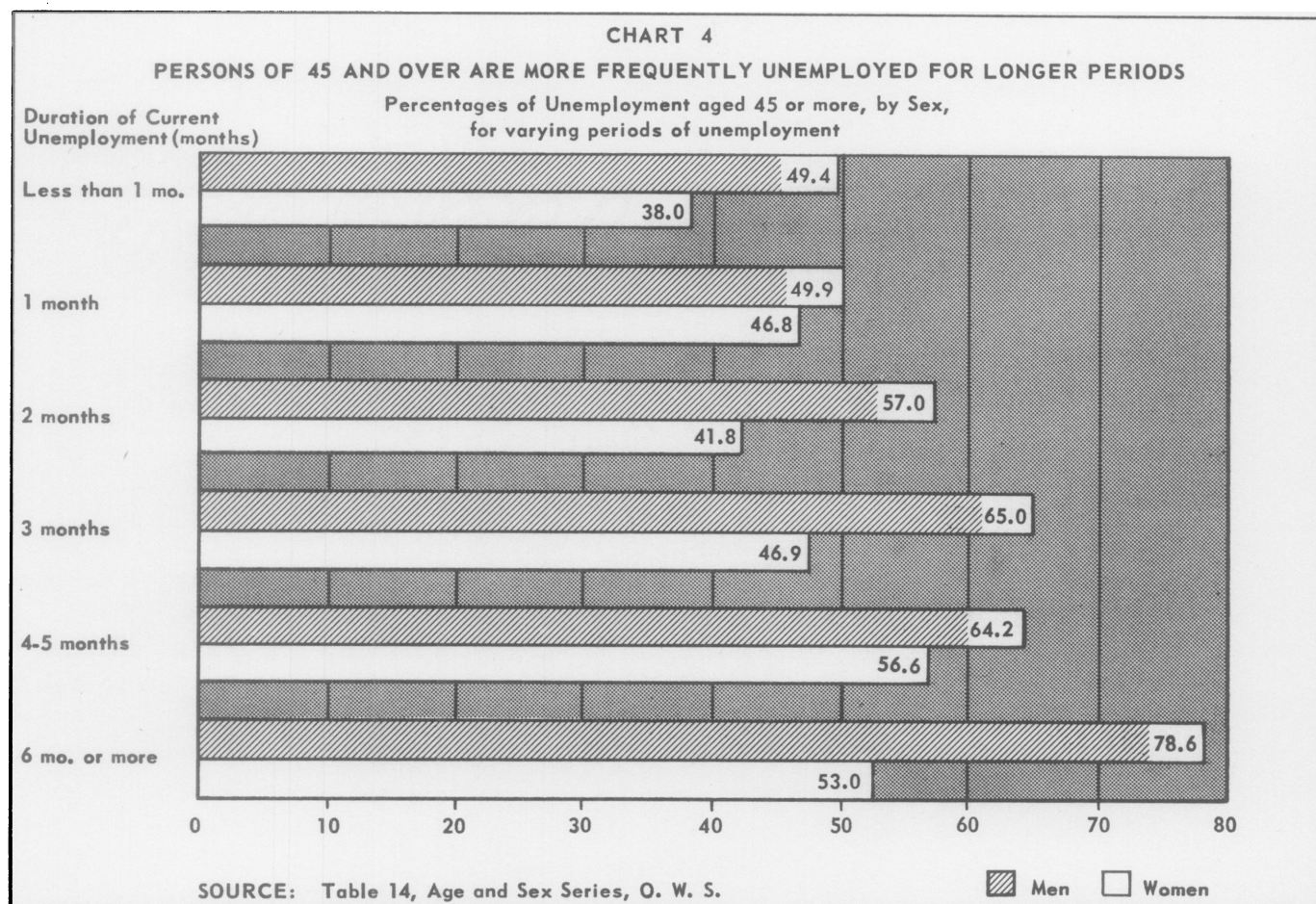
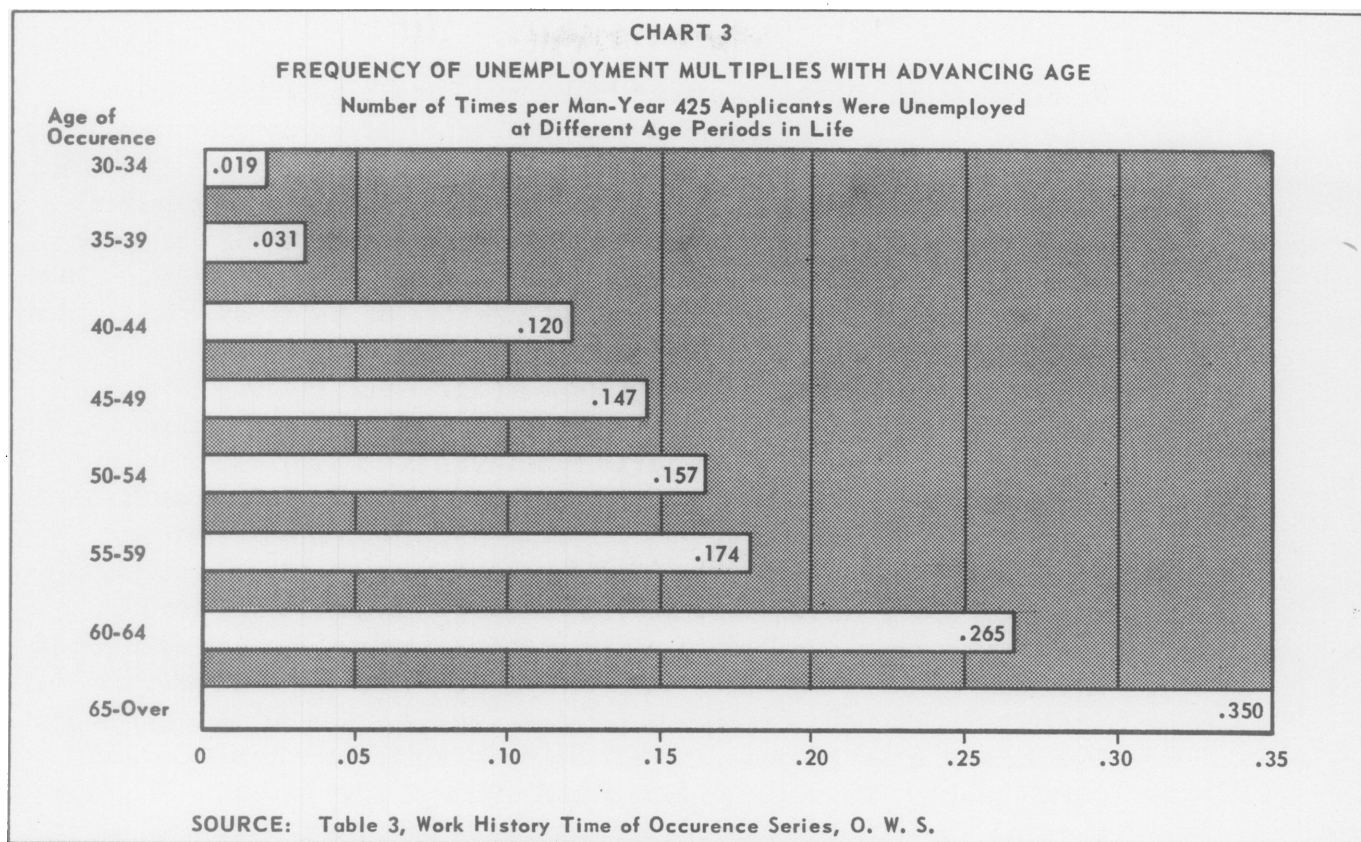
The chance that a given individual will be out of work at age 60 appears to be 13 times as great as it was when he was 30. This situation is graphically portrayed in Chart 3 which shows the number of times 425 randomly selected older applicants were out of work at different periods in life.

3. Unemployment difficulties for men are likely to multiply in the 55-64 age bracket. Women are likely to find themselves out of work after age 35 and may find it especially hard to obtain work from 45 to 54 years. Persons over 45 are likely to be out of work for longer periods than younger persons. This is shown in Chart 4.

B. Older persons in certain occupations or lines of business may be more likely to find themselves out of work than in others, but such differences are subordinate to the basic fact that they are aging.

1. Skilled, semi-skilled, and service workers are most frequently represented among the unemployed. Such workers are also more likely to be found among the unemployed if they are over 45.
2. Much unemployment among skilled and semi-skilled workers at the time of the survey was due to lay offs in the construction industry, which was at a low ebb during the winter. Nearly two-thirds of the unemployed construction workers were over 45 years of age. Unemployment was also noticeable among skilled and semi-skilled workers in the 55-64 age bracket who had been employed in non-durable manufacturing.
3. Periods of unemployment up to a year in length are conspicuous at the age of 55-64 in manufacturing and in transportation and also among clerical and professional-managerial workers. Excessively long periods of unemployment occur in all fields at age 65-up.

4. A substantial supply of unemployed workers classed as skilled may perhaps be attributed to the insistence of many manufacturing firms upon specialized experience in specific operations. A need for retraining facilities appears because of the rapid industrial expansion of the area and the in-migration of workers who may be skilled but not necessarily in work required in the area. This can be achieved through vocational schools or by in-service training.
 5. Nearly two-thirds of all those looking for work in the service occupations are over 45 years of age. High percentages of persons over that age formerly employed in hotels, restaurants and similar enterprises have been out of work for six months or more during the past three years. Unemployment definitely becomes a problem in that field after the age of 45. Its seriousness for those in the service industries is further indicated by the fact that the number of claimants for unemployment compensation among such workers rises markedly with increasing age.
 6. Periods of unemployment are relatively brief in wholesale and retail trade. Unemployment in the clerical and sales fields may become serious in later maturity; however, more than half of the unemployed workers in those two fields are under 45 years of age. Unemployed workers among the unskilled are also under 45 for the most part.
 7. Lesser education affects the employment prospects of older persons. Employment increases in relation to the number of years of school attended up to the college level; a far larger proportion of older persons with elementary education are therefore out of work. Persons of 55 or more with but grade school education are apt to be unemployed for six months or more.
 8. The proportion of older applicants at the Miami Employment offices is steadily increasing. In 1953 only 40 per cent of all applicants were 45 and over; in 1955, 45 per cent, and in January of 1956, the percentage reached 57.
- C. Although nearly half of the job seekers in the area are relative newcomers, the group is not made up to any great extent of "drifters", "job-hoppers", or unemployables. Since its members make up a cross-section of the American working public they have good points. Too many of them come to Miami, however, without any assurance of employment. Sundry characteristics and qualifications in relation to age disclosed in the study of 2,000 applicants are these:



1. Forty-six per cent have been in Miami for less than one year, the larger proportion being under 45 years of age. Private employment agencies, especially those catering to the service industry, report much the same percentage of newly-arrived job seekers. The bulk of recent arrivals is accounted for by seasonal workers and transient visitors who are now becoming a year-round factor.
2. The work records show that older workers are more likely to settle permanently in the area than are younger persons. This is particularly true of those over age 55. If the desire of the mature group to become integrated into the work and life of the community is to be realized, this means that more assistance in job finding will have to be provided.
3. About one-third of all those out of work have lived in the area for more than six years. Three-fifths of these are over age 45.
4. High percentages of older long-time residents are shown to be unemployed for long periods of time. This may mean that some employers who insist on permanent residence as a hiring requirement are also insisting on younger workers.
5. The extent of the unemployment of older permanent residents and their difficulty in finding work constitutes an economic hindrance to the development and prosperity of the area and spotlights the need for expanded employment facilities.
6. As to health and physical condition, about one-fourth of the unemployed group reported minor handicaps of eyesight or hearing. Very few have obvious major physical handicaps. Practically none of the applicants over 45 reported having been out of the labor force because of health more than once during the past 15 years. Very few past industrial accidents are reported.
7. Two out of five of the older unemployed have owned their own homes for at least one year in the past 15. Such ownership may not have been local. Another two out of five unemployed men belong to labor unions as compared to one in ten for women.
8. Older job seekers are in much the same situation as younger ones with reference to dependents and just as much in need of employment in order to maintain them. Nearly two-thirds of the older applicants had one or more dependents. Persons over 45 with dependents, oddly enough, have had more unemployment during the past three years than those with no dependents.

9. More than half of all the unemployed, mainly from skilled and semi-skilled occupations, are claimants for unemployment compensation. Among applicants at the employment office the percentage of claimants increases with age.
 10. A favorable attribute of older workers is their willingness to spend more time in traveling to and from work than younger workers. The attitude of older workers with reference to travel time may be influenced by job competition from younger persons. This is not true of those of 65 and over largely because of their lack of adequate transportation.
 11. As to the source from which most of Miami's unemployed generally seek work, a third report finding their jobs by applying directly to employers. This is more than twice the proportion relying upon the public employment office.
- D. The past earnings of work applicants in the Miami area varies widely and tends to show fewer wage changes after middle age.
1. Unemployment is found at all income levels. Total incomes from all sources for the year 1954 of the entire group sampled are unevenly distributed on the dollar scale. Incomes grouped themselves at less than \$2500, around \$3500, and a considerable number were in the \$5000-\$6000 class. The income pattern was undoubtedly influenced by irregular earnings of seasonal workers.
 2. Although income and earnings in the life of most individuals normally reach a typical level in the early 40's, no consistent income pattern in relation to age is shown by the entire 2,000 unemployed under study. The only marked exception is a substantial decrease in income at age 65.
 3. Earnings of the 2,000 unemployed in the last job held do not rise to any extent above the amount earned on other jobs during a three-year period, aside from those of persons in the higher wage brackets.
 4. The work history of older persons over a 15 year period shows less likelihood of any change in earnings after age 45. There is evidence, however, that earnings in the lower income brackets tends to decrease after that age. Downgrading in salary at any level is likely to occur at age 65.
 5. Less than one in five of the unemployed have any other source of income than earnings from work.

6. Irregular employment in service, construction, and manufacturing industries materially reduces personal income and spending power and points to the need of further efforts to stabilize employment in the Greater Miami area.
- E. Substantially greater employment stability is shown in the work history of persons over age 45. A steady work record in the earlier years, however, does not necessarily appear to improve an individual's prospects of finding satisfactory employment after age 45. Older applicants with a good work record, who can demonstrate their capacity to produce, may warrant more consideration for local employment than they presently receive.
1. Older persons are more likely than younger ones to continue on one job for a longer period of time. The employment record of the selected group of older persons as shown by 15 year work histories was practically as good as that of the entire 2,000 of all ages during the past three years. Persons over 45 are twice as likely to hold jobs for four or more years. In the 15 year study one third of the men worked more than 15 years on their longest job in life.
 2. On the other hand, one-third of all the unemployed held their last job for less than six months. This was the case far more often among younger persons than old. This high percentage of short-time employment appears due to seasonal and irregular work on the part of the local labor market. Short-time employment is more frequent in the construction industry and in service enterprises.
 3. That three-fourths of the entire unemployed group worked little more than two out of the past three years is a record which on its face doubtless compares unfavorably with employment in other cities less subject to seasonal and irregular employment than Greater Miami. Relatively steadier employment during the past three years is indicated for men from 55-64 and women from 45-54 than for those in younger age groups.
 4. When the length of service of employed workers in the area is compared with the duration of the last job held by the job seekers interviewed it is startling to discover that the stability of those over 45 seeking work is actually greater than those who were currently employed. This is shown in Table VIII.

Table VIII
Percentage Comparison by Age Groups of Length of Service
of Employed Population with Duration of Last Job of
Unemployed Applicants in Metropolitan Miami

Age Group	Length of Past Service			
	Under 1 year	1-4 years	5-9 years	10 years or more
Employed Workers				
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 45	77.1	62.8	64.3	43.2
45 and over	22.9	27.2	35.7	56.8
Unemployed Workers				
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 45	51.2	53.4	44.8	18.9
45 and over	49.8	46.6	55.2	81.1

Source: Table 6, OWS Employment Patterns and Table 5, Duration of Unemployment

Reference to the table will show that the past employment record of unemployed under 45 is not as good as those locally employed. With the exception of the group of applicants whose last job was for less than a year (largely seasonal workers) larger percentages of unemployed than of employed workers have been employed for periods of a year or more. The inference is that as far as staying with a job is concerned, the older unemployed labor supply has a better record than the force presently at work.

5. More than a third of the unemployed of all ages held one job steadily during the past three years of employment; the showing made by women is better than by the men. The 15 year work experience of the over 45 group reveals that two-thirds of them held from three to nine jobs during that time. Women changed somewhat less often.
6. Twice as many persons over age 45 as under were out of work from two to five months during the past three years, despite their favorable showing in holding one job for two years or more. This is shown in the work record of the selected older group.
7. Employment of greater duration than two years is shown by more than half of those employed in manufacturing industry. Clerical and professional-managerial jobs tend to continue for longer periods

of time. One-third of those from 45 to 64 years in the clerical field held their last jobs for more than 10 years. Much higher percentages for extended employment, even up to 20 years, are evidenced by persons of 65 and over.

8. Men over age 45 do not lose time away from the labor force (able and willing to work whether employed or not) because of inability to work or because they do not have to work. Absences from the labor force grow fewer as age increases. Of the 55-64 year age group, 80 per cent lost no time from the labor force whatever in the past three years.
9. After age 45 there appears to be less likelihood of workers changing jobs or moving from one area to another in search of work. The tendency for some men to change jobs from age 40 to 50 may perhaps be attributed to being forced to change their line of work. Women change their town or work less often than men. The strong relationship between worker mobility and age is confirmed by a report of the U. S. Bureau of Old Age and Survivors Insurance (Analytical Note Number 80). This provides evidence that mobility rates decrease with age and that certain workers at all ages show a predilection for change. Changes over 45 are apparent even though these may frequently interfere with eligibility for private pension plans.
10. The number of persons transferring to lower grade occupations after the age of 45 may be due to their inability to meet the physical requirements of employment because of age. Technological developments are doubtless a factor. Skilled workers at that age, for example, are found to accept semi-skilled or service employment. Changes of occupation seem more necessary in the lower income brackets.

5. FACTORS AFFECTING EMPLOYMENT OF OLDER WORKERS

Employer Practice and Policy

As a part of the Older Worker Study in metropolitan Miami, information was obtained from 325 establishments employing more than 50 workers each regarding their personnel policy and practice relative to workers over age 45. These establishments employed about 65,000 workers. The questionnaire form used was designed to find out whether employers were making adaptations of their personnel program in order to recruit older workers or retain those in their employ and it asked about the existence of pension plans.

A study of the information received indicates that for the most part, relatively few employers in the Miami area are making a special effort to employ workers over age 45, but a substantial number are taking steps to retain older workers that have made good. These do not hesitate to voice their praise of the performance of such workers. The average older worker is well taken care of insofar as company policy is concerned. There is little evidence, however, that employers are setting up any systematic program for recruiting and selecting mature applicants from the available labor supply or that they are standardizing their practice with regard to the retainment of older workers now employed.

Less than a third of the reporting establishments said they sometimes changed job processes or duties, or transferred older employees who might otherwise have to be laid off or retired. Lay-offs and call-backs are generally based on length of service. Very few reported a "reserve pool" of retired workers who may be recalled on a temporary basis.

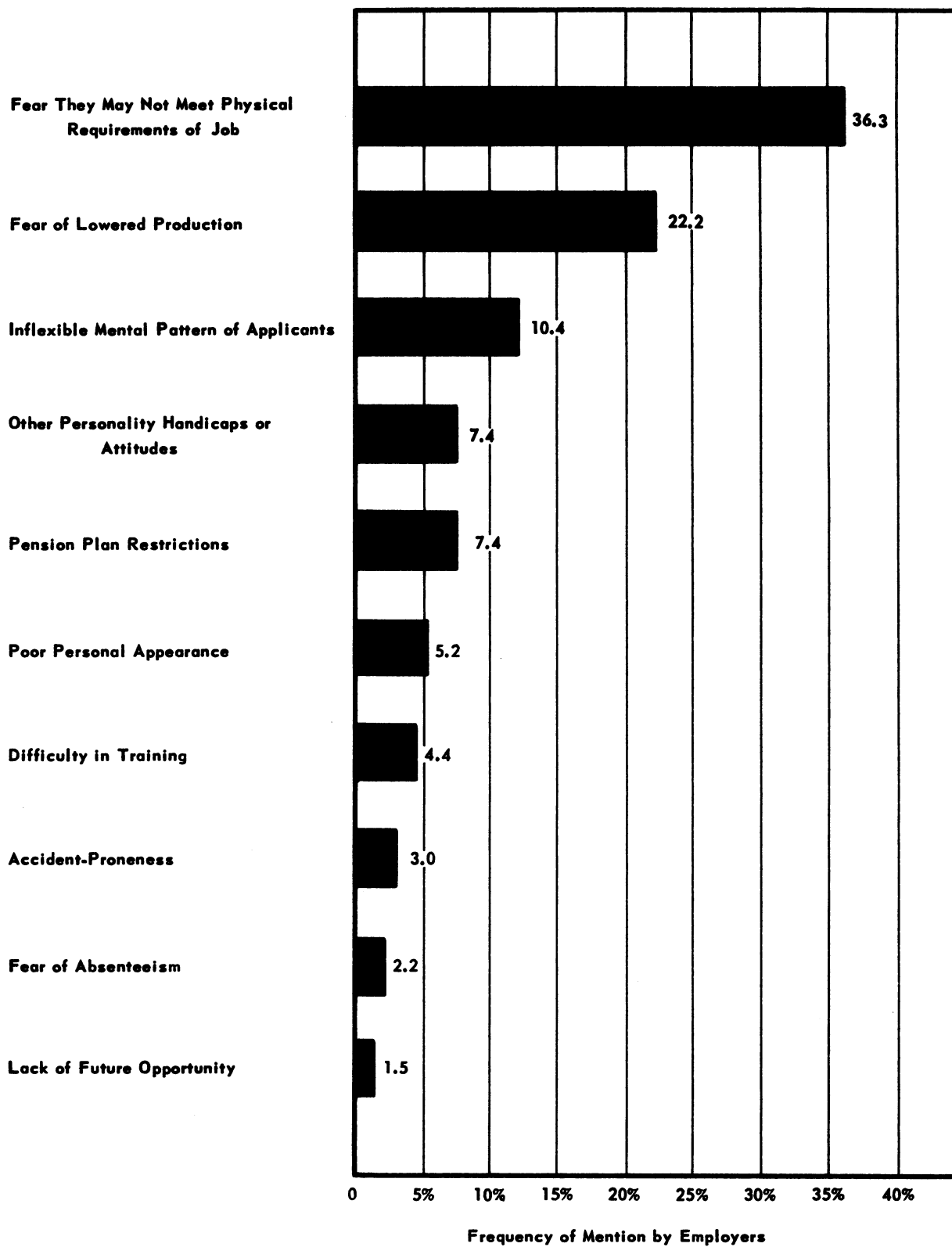
In a very few instances is there any indication that formalized job analysis is used to identify suitable jobs for older workers, that physical examinations are used in transferring aging workers, or that pre-retirement counseling is in effect. Apparently firms with pension plans retain very few workers on the payroll over the compulsory retirement age.

Job engineering, involving the redesign of equipment or process, appears practically non-existent in the area, but 98 employers reported that they make some informal effort to change duties or transfer workers as they age. A fourth of the firms, mostly large ones, reported that there were some jobs which large numbers of workers over 45 performed especially well. Concentration of older workers in certain operations or departments was reported in something more than 10 per cent of the questionnaires.

It appears that a considerable number of employing firms appreciate the potential of workers over 45, but are not sufficiently informed regarding the entire problem of utilizing older workers in industry to have done much of anything about it. A more extensive program of information and education will be required in order to encourage larger numbers of local business enterprises to adjust their policies relative to older workers, in matters of recruitment, selection, evaluation of performance, transfer and retirement. This is to be expected in an area in which a majority of employing firms are of small size. Recognition of changing personnel problems and adoption of new personnel techniques usually begins with enterprises organized on a large scale with a staff and resources to develop them.

CHART 5

MIAMI EMPLOYERS TEND TO LIMIT HIRING OF WORKERS OVER 45



SOURCE: Questionnaires from 325 employers

Why Employers are Reluctant to Hire Older Workers

Employers in the area who cooperated in the survey were asked to list in order of importance the problems which in their experience tended to limit the hiring of those whom they considered older workers. An analysis of the 135 responses given is shown in Chart 5.

Responses from employers in the six other cities surveyed were much the same as those in Miami except that somewhat more importance was attached to pensions and retirement. Other lesser reasons cited were preference for younger workers in entry jobs, failure to get along with others, and excessive demands for higher salaries and other benefits. Considerable generalization was made to justify reluctance in hiring older workers, many of the reasons cited having little relationship to age as such, as is pointed out in following sections of this report.

Business enterprise is subject to a number of pressures which tend to perpetuate a preference for the employment of younger persons. The precedent that compulsory retirement is a necessary and desirable practice is only now being modified. Greater convenience in personnel administration and in pension planning has been a factor in setting maximum age limits in hiring. The established policies of organized labor enter into the picture. Business is pressured from within and without the organization to provide jobs for younger people and furnish them promotional opportunities. A progressive enterprise needs its quota of "new blood"; it cannot succeed when overmanned by senescent and ultraconservative "chair warmers". Production costs and profits are basic considerations; the practicability of employing older workers must often be demonstrated by trial experience to supply facts about labor costs in relation to production.

Arbitrary Age Restrictions

In placing orders with employment agencies, in advertising job openings and in accepting applications, many employers are inclined to set maximum age limits, often arbitrarily. In order to ascertain the extent of this practice, the survey included a study of all job orders received from employers for two months by the Miami Employment office. This showed that of more than 6000 orders received, nearly 73% carried upper age restrictions. However, when orders for negro day workers are excluded this percentage drops to 65. The pattern of restrictions by age groups appears in Chart 6.

More than half of the orders in all seven survey areas in the country specified upper age limits of under 55. Restrictions placed by employers in Miami for workers under 45, however, were more numerous than for any of the other cities and implied greater local resistance to hiring

older workers. Local restrictions were found to be more numerous for unskilled, service and clerical jobs and were more frequently specified by large rather than small firms. In other cities age restrictions for service workers were found to be less common than in Miami.

Physical Fitness and Performance

The outstanding reason cited by employers for not considering the employment of workers over 45 is an actual or assumed inability to meet the physical requirements of the job and therefore to be effective producers. The question of whether a job applicant is physically and mentally vigorous and alert enough to do what the particular job requires is the first one considered in hiring any workers, old or young. The only difference in the case of an older applicant appears to be that he is usually eliminated from consideration at the start, on the basis of his years, rather than on objective evidence.

In very few instances in the Miami area is capacity verified by physical examination, by aptitude or performance tests, or a try-out on the job. Despite the reported opinion that older workers are lacking in stamina and do not turn out enough work, not a single local employer reported having reliable statistical data or records to substantiate his opinion in this regard.

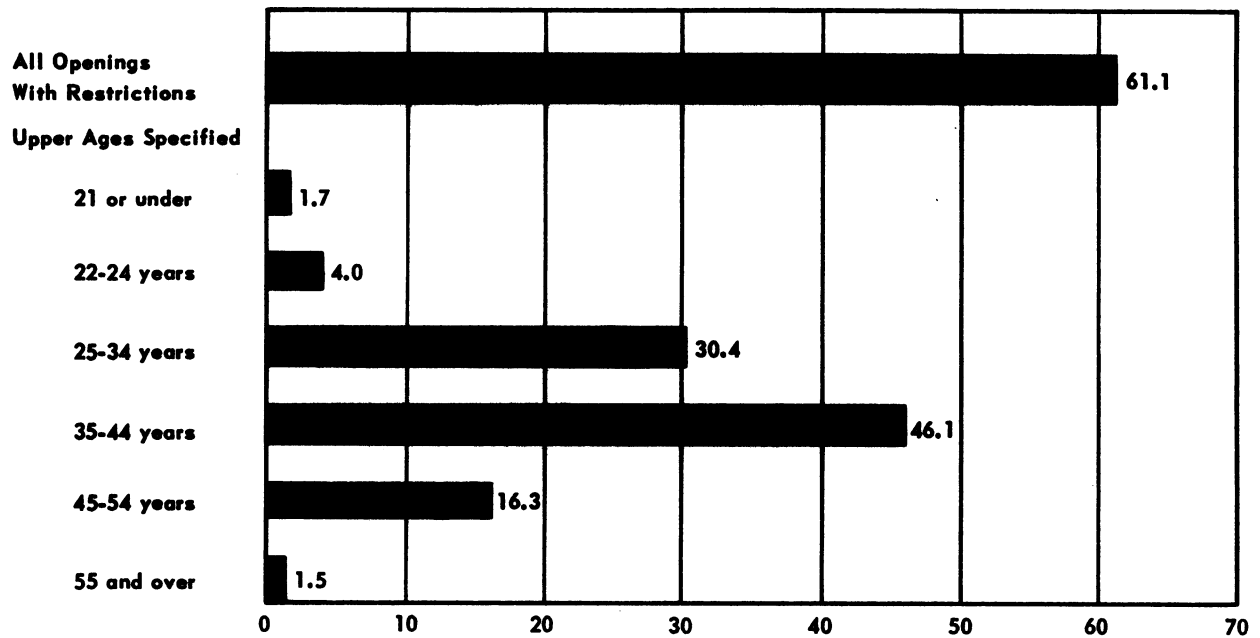
Authorities agree that physiological and mental changes in capacities of individuals occur throughout the normal life span. The findings reported in research to date as to the changes which take place as part of the aging process have been summarized in a publication of the Florida State Department of Education. (23) This report shows that physical vigor as indicated by vital capacity, strength of pull and hand grip diminish slowly beyond twenty years. Eyesight falls off markedly after 45 and hearing shows a slow and gradual decline through the years.

Studies of changes in intellectual capacity with age tend to show that intelligence as measured by speed tests falls off from about 25 years to 42 years. Learning ability does not fall off to any great extent and accuracy, judgment and reasoning ability may develop in the later years to offset losses in speed in the functioning of intelligence. Dr. Walter A. Miles sums up the decline of capacity with age by saying: "The years of a man's life give no reliable measure of his probable capacity... there is no critical age at which production ceases... it is the individual personality that sets the limit."

Too little objective evidence exists to prove whether or not older workers are less productive than younger ones, but considerable research is now being undertaken in this field, part of it as a project of the U.S. Department of Labor. Production can be measured by output, by piecework earnings and by merit ratings.

CHART 6

PERCENTAGES OF JOB OPENINGS SPECIFYING UPPER AGE LIMITS SET BY EMPLOYERS



SOURCE: Orders Placed with Miami Employment Service in February, 1956

A recent study just completed by the Labor Department in factories making footwear and men's clothing covering some 4000 workers shows that productivity of both male and female pieceworkers does not vary with age until after 54. After that age the decline is not of serious proportions. There appears to be no consistent difference in the pattern of age-productivity relation between workers in higher and lower paid occupations. One earlier study in a carpet making plant indicated that the proportion of satisfactory workers declined after age 60 and another in a similar plant showed no significant differences between workers under and over 45.

Production as related to age appears to vary widely with the tasks performed and with the individual workers. The limited data available suggest a decline of older men and women on piecework. Machine-paced jobs requiring fast movement seem to bear heavily on the most vulnerable points of older workers--physical coordination and speed. Increased mechanization and automation in industry will naturally tend to lessen the need of mere physical strength and speed on the part of older production workers.

Ninety-three per cent of 2800 employers questioned by the National Association of Manufacturers said their older workers were as good as or better than younger employees in performance, attendance, safety and work attitudes.

Temple University recently asked 97 large Pennsylvania manufacturers their experience with workers over 45, companies making steel, oil, electrical equipment, clothing, and dairy products. On quantity of production 40% of their older employees were rated as average and 21% as above average. On quality of production nearly 70% were rated above average.

Opinions of Miami Employers: Miami employers were asked in what jobs older workers were found most acceptable in their experience. Replies were not entirely consistent as between different establishments, but indicate some fields for which workers over 45 may be considered. The list is by no means exhaustive. The jobs in which older persons were reported successfully employed are as follows:

Accountants
Addressograph Operators
Auto Repair Men
Bakers
Bank Analysis Clerks
Bench Workers, Precision
Block Masons

Boatbuilders
Bookkeepers
Building Maintenance Men
Cabinet Makers
Carpenters
Cashiers, Restaurant
Cement Finishers

Doormen, Theater
Dry Cleaners
Elevator Operators
Expeditors
Filing Clerks
Flaremen
Food Pre-packagers
Guards
Hotel Clerks
Hotel Maids
Housekeepers
Janitors
Kitchen Helpers
Lumber Checkers
Lumber Salesmen
Machine Shop Inspectors
Machinists, Precision
Mailing Room Clerks
Messengers
Millworkers

Mortgage Interviewers
Movie Projectionists
New Account Clerks
Order Pickers and Pricers
Parking Lot Attendants
Pastry and Candy Workers
Payroll Clerks
Pressmen
Receptionists
Sales Clerks, Women's Wear
Sales Persons, Department Store
Salesmen, Insurance
Salesmen, Telephone
Sewing Machine Operators
Stock Room Markers
Timekeepers
Tool and Die Makers
Truck Drivers
Truck Maintenance Men
Watchmen

Employers were visited in the course of the Miami survey whenever it was learned that they had given considerable thought to the older worker problem. Many others wrote their impressions of older workers in letters which accompanied the questionnaires. Opinions expressed are summarized below:

Restaurants: Of two old established restaurants employing around 70 persons each, the percentage of employees over 45 is more than 70 per cent. "Absences from work and accidents are negligible. Older workers are more courteous to the public and better satisfied with their work than young ones...are more likely to satisfy the customer." A restaurant firm operating dining rooms and lunch counters at transportation depots reports success in the employment of older capable persons as waitresses and kitchen helpers. Men over 65 receiving social security benefits are also employed in a part-time capacity for night supervisory work because of their reliability.

Food Stores: Many jobs in grocery chain stores involve lifting, continued standing, speed, or agility, which must be sought from younger help. However, food merchandising does appear to permit the employment of older persons who remain physically fit. Among the larger employers greatly interested in retaining older workers but having very little opportunity for the employment of other older applicants unless they have had specialized experience is a large food chain in which transfers to less strenuous work of a different field are made as workers find themselves unable to maintain a normal work pace.

Older managers, maintenance workers, truck drivers, office clerks and cashiers with experience elsewhere can be employed provided their record of past employment with other firms in the same line will stand rigorous inspection. The employment of older women as cashiers in checking and bagging food purchases is open to serious question because of the requirement of standing on one's feet throughout the day. Very few women over 40 can be considered for such work. A large number of older women, however, are employed in pre-packaging meats, produce and other groceries in the rear of the food markets and are said to be performing excellent work. Similarly of more than 50 watchmen most of them are over 50 years of age. Many porters range from 40 to 60 years.

A firm with a number of small retail branches states that it has found consistent success in employing women as store sales clerks up to 70 years of age. These clerks receive from \$30 to \$40 per week for relatively light work ranging from 35 to 45 hours per week. The firm admits that some older applicants "have poor dispositions, are difficult to train and slow in their work" but is interested in continuing the employment of active capable oldsters.

An old company engaged in food processing and distribution has no retirement plan but keeps older workers on even though their production has fallen off. This employer states that the accident rate and absences among older workers is less and their stability is greater.

An Oil Company: One of the oldest and largest oil distributing companies in the area shows about 65 per cent of the workers to be over 45. The following is reported:

1. Older employees are more conscientious and are absent less.
2. Accident rate is higher with the younger workers; the older ones are cautious.
3. Older workers have greater stability and are more productive.

Airlines: Air transportation and maintenance, with allied industry, employs nearly ten per cent of the workers in the area. In this field workers under 45 are nearly three times as numerous as those over that age. This is due to the relative youth of the industry, the need for active youthful vigor in the performance of many tasks and the cost of specialized training.

This viewpoint is expressed by the personnel executive for one of the largest companies, who says: "The age of the employee or potential employee under consideration is almost never a controlling factor in what this company does about him. Age by itself is of importance only insofar as it may limit the future useful life of an individual. In

other words, we do not think it is economically sound to hire a man of say, sixty, in a job that it will take him three years to learn and in which we can expect full productivity for only two years more. The controlling factors in most instances are the physical, mental, moral, and technical qualifications."

Another personnel director suggests that more older women could be employed in clerical work and that middle-aged men can be hired for cleaning planes and for custodial work.

The Construction Industry: Older established contractors have a list of older workers who have been irregularly in their employ for many years and who are subject to call whenever work is available for them. Comments such as these from contractors are frequent: "We try to have every fifth worker over 50." "The age of a man is no consideration of ours." "Many older men have worked for us for years." "We never discriminate because of age. If a man is able to do a good day's work we hire him whether he's 25 or 75. We have a carpenter aged 77 who works whenever work is available. Another good man works as a laborer at 70." "We definitely prefer older workers because they are more conscientious and reliable."

One large building firm maintains a high percentage of older workers fairly continuously since it has succeeded in receiving overlapping contracts. This firm is one of the few construction firms which does not have a terrific labor turnover in the area. It believes that a stabilized personnel pays off. This company further fills in the gap of slack periods by agreements with future building owners to keep in repair and correct any defects that may develop after the building has been finished, and for a period of years thereafter.

The Hotel Industry: Hotel operation in the area is a major field and one involving a substantial part of the labor market. Until recently the industry was seasonal but is now a year-round enterprise which could profitably lower its excessive labor turnover. Pension and benefit plans are uncommon. For the most part, the accent in employment has been on youth, especially in the larger establishments. A few of the older high class hotels have found it worthwhile to retain a large percentage of older workers in various capacities.

Miscellaneous Businesses: A financial institution with several offices in the area had been employing young women to do cashiering, keep simple records, and do other general clerical work. The turnover was great and it was found far more satisfactory to hire older qualified men with some typing ability.

A large firm engaged in real estate sales and management has many employees 45 years of age and over. The official in charge of employment points out that older applicants are good for sales work. For building maintenance work they are most reliable. For office work mature women are preferred because "many young girls fall flat on their faces" when starting on office routine with which they have had no experience.

The manufacturing industry in Miami is expanding fast but is for the most part restricted to small industries having less than 50 employees. Among the larger manufacturing firms none is outstanding in making an effort to recruit workers over 45. A number of the smaller enterprises, especially those manufacturing women's garments or sportswear, have tried in a small way to give special consideration to the employment of workers from 45 to 55, but few have employed any considerable number of workers over 60. About a dozen firms, including four in the needle trades, have been given special citations by the Golden Age Committee of the Miami-Dade County Chamber of Commerce for recruiting older workers.

Absenteeism and Illness

The physical fitness of a worker to continue in competitive production is affected by chronic and by temporary illness. Invalidism increases rapidly with age, but older persons seriously disabled are relatively unimportant in the labor supply. Rehabilitation is being expanded to return handicapped and older workers to the job market. What about lesser illness and its incidence as age increases? There has been no national health survey for twenty years to provide current data. (9) In the meantime, the amazing progress in the discovery of antibiotic and other drugs has almost eliminated most communicable disease, greatly improved health standards and appears to be on the point of extending the life span of older persons.

The study showed that disabilities increased with age. One in every ten workers under age 45 reported physical handicaps. The proportion increased to one in seven among job seekers 45 to 54 years of age and to one in four for those aged 65 and over. Handicaps among older women appeared to be only two-thirds as great as among older men. The foregoing data was reported in an initial interview with job seekers. Physical examinations would tend to increase the relative incidence of disability. Handicaps are often offset by other desirable characteristics.

Evidence of the health of workers is available in industrial records of time lost because of illness and accidents. All studies that have been made of absences from work indicate that the number of absences decreases with age but the average length of absences due to illness tend to increase. The poorest record of absences is shown by the youngest

workers, the best by those over 50. Women in middle life do not have as good a record as men, but compare favorably after age 50.

It appears likely that the low accident rate among older workers is due not only to their increased caution but because they are less frequently placed in hazardous jobs. A New York State study suggests that workers over 55 are less subject to accidents involving machinery but more subject to slips or falls and that among workers over 65, overexertion is a major cause of accidents. Another study of 18,000 workers showed that those over 45 had 2.5 per cent fewer accidents than those under that age.

According to Bureau of Labor Statistics studies, the highest accident rates occur in the 35-44 age bracket. After that they drop steadily and workers from 65-75 have the best record of all. The average duration of disability in work injuries is reported as longest from 45-49 and 55-59.

Personal Traits of Mature Workers

Present limitations upon the employment of persons of 45 and over are due not only to employers but to older job applicants as well. An agreeable and cooperative attitude is needed for vocational success at any time of life. Far too many domineering, crotchety, conservative, self-centered or frustrated men and women are found in the ranks of older persons lined up at the "Help Wanted" counter today. If they are to be employed, they must recognize their personality handicaps and overcome them. "Personality Clinics" or counseling will be helpful but the problem is basically an individual one. Fortunately it involves only a limited number, but they tend to discredit the entire aging population.

Many types of personality handicaps became apparent in the course of the intensive effort staged by the Miami State Employment office to speed up the placement of older workers. Evidence came from employers to whom job referrals were made and from fellow applicants. Among the objectionable traits with which some job seekers were charged were these:

- "Know-it-all" attitude.
- Inability to get along with younger workers.
- Dislike of orders from junior supervisors.
- Inflexibility of opinion - "set-in-their-ways".
- Oversensitivity to criticism.
- Carelessness about personal appearance.
- Too talkative about past experiences.
- Too fussy or meticulous.
- Unrealistic salary demands.
- Inability to "see" themselves objectively.
- Fear of uncertainty; defeatist attitude.

Offsetting these unfavorable characteristics is a host of favorable attributes with which Miami employers who have employed mature workers give them credit.

- They are more reliable and conscientious.
- They are more appreciative of work opportunity.
- They waste less time and have fewer outside distractions.
- Their judgment is mellowed by experience.
- They are less likely to fly off the handle.
- They stir up less trouble.
- They are more loyal and have more respect for authority.
- They are not always watching the time clock. (5, 19, 21)

Pensions and Insurance Costs

The provisions of private pension plans and related "benefits" of group life insurance, workmen's compensation and sickness and accident insurance are regarded by many employers as barriers to the employment of older workers. In order to determine whether such an attitude is justified in the light of the available facts and the costs involved, the Secretary of Labor appointed a committee of fourteen of the leading authorities on pensions and benefits to investigate. The committee, assisted by a number of consultants, made an extended study during 1956 and presented its conclusions which were included in reports on the Older Worker Study. The committee findings may serve to encourage employers to re-examine their thinking about what are often regarded as prohibitive costs in hiring workers over age 45.

The Extent of Pension Coverage: Pension plan coverage has been greatly extended in recent years and plans have been liberalized. About one fourth of all non-agricultural workers in the U. S. are now included in private pension plans. The proportion of workers so covered is much higher in some industries and in some areas than others, and is almost universal in the largest employing establishments. More than 13 million workers are covered by private pension plans that supplement the Federal Old-Age and Survivors' Insurance programs and of these, about sixty per cent are participants under collective bargaining.

In metropolitan Miami about 40 per cent of workers in establishments of eight or more employees are now eligible for retirement benefits under private pension plans. This is lower than the 66 per cent of workers under pension plans in the seven cities, most of which are more highly industrialized. The local pension plan coverage of employed workers in relation to their age, industry, major occupational groups and size of establishment in which employed, appears in Tables IX and X.

Table IX
Percentage Distribution of Employment by Age and Pension
Plan Coverage, Metropolitan Miami

Pension Plan Coverage	Total	Under 25	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 and Over
Total							
Employees	100	12.6	30.1	29.5	18.7	7.4	1.7
Total Covered by Pension Plans	100	9.8	31.7	32.9	16.3	7.8	1.5
Total Not Covered by Pension Plans	100	14.1	29.3	27.5	20.0	7.3	1.8

Source: O.W.S. Pension Plan Table 2

Table X
Percentage Distribution of Employment by Pension Plan Coverage,
Industry, Major Occupational Group and Size of Firm, Metropolitan Miami

Industry, Occupation, Size of Firm	Total	Covered by Pension Plans	Not Covered by Pension Plans
Total Employment			
by Industry	100	40.7	59.3
Construction	100	0.0	100.0
Manufacturing	100	29.0	71.0
Transp., Commun. & Utilities	100	86.8	13.2
Trade	100	22.0	78.0
Finance, Insur., & Real Estate	100	73.8	26.2
Service	100	8.3	91.7
Other	100	90.0	10.0
Total Employment by Occupation	100	35.0	65.0
Professional-Managerial	100	67.6	32.4
Clerical, Sales	100	33.7	66.3
Production, Maintenance	100	30.9	69.1
Not Reported	100	11.8	88.2
Total Employment by Size of Firm	100	40.7	59.3
50-99 Employees	100	12.6	87.4
100-499 Employees	100	21.3	78.7
500-999 Employees	100	89.5	10.5
1000 or more Employees	100	96.6	3.4

Source: O.W.S. Pension Plan Tables 2, 6, 7.

Table IX shows the highest proportions of workers both within and outside of pension plans to be in the 25 to 44 age bracket. The percentage of workers over age 45 is 25.6 per cent of the total covered by pension plans as compared with 29.1 per cent of workers of that age not covered by such plans. It appears that only one in ten of all employed workers in the area is in the 45 and over age bracket and in line for benefits during the next 20 years, assuming retirement at age 65. For older workers in the area there is therefore relatively little prospect of receiving industrial pensions to supplement social security benefits. This fact has a significant impact on the economy of the area.

Table X shows that pension coverage is most common in the transportation and utilities field and financial and related institutions. The airlines employees constitute the largest single group of workers covered by pension plans.

Findings as to Pension and Insurance Costs: Any study of the cost of pensions and employee benefits is made complex because of the lack of uniformity or standardization of pattern among the more than 25,000 plans in effect throughout the U. S. (16) For each employer the question of easing restrictions upon the hiring of older workers becomes one of appraising the effects of such a policy in terms of operating and overhead costs.

The benefit formulas of pension plans usually consider the employee's earnings and/or his credited length of service. Many plans specify a maximum age beyond which workers cannot be included or result in practice in rejecting applicants whose age would prevent them from being employed long enough to qualify for benefits at retirement. In studying a sampling of pension plans affecting three million workers, the Bureau of Labor Statistics found that more than half of them had a maximum hiring age above which workers cannot qualify for pensions. (18) Plans covering about 30 per cent of the workers in the study established a maximum qualifying age below 60 years. Two-thirds of the plans also required that service requirements, commonly ten or more years, be met.

The recent conclusions of the U. S. Department of Labor based on the investigation of a group of outside authorities in the field, (17) are summarized as follows:

Employers may offer two kinds of reasons for a belief that pensions interfere with hiring older workers:

1. That the costs of providing adequate pension rights are much more for an older new employee than for a younger one;
2. That to permit older new employees to waive pension rights, or to earn less than "adequate" pension rights, would create an unfavorable public reaction toward the employer.

The basis for the second of these reasons has been removed or greatly reduced in recent years by the extension of Social Security coverage and the increase in benefits earned. It is estimated that men aged 45 to 64 working steadily at present-day wages will have earnings sufficient to qualify them for monthly retirement benefits averaging \$100 for a single man. A modest supplementary pension such as could be earned in ten years or less under most pension formulas ought not to subject the employer to unfavorable criticism. In addition, a relatively small but increasing number of older workers is acquiring "portable" or vested rights to private pension benefits in previous employment.

The real and ultimate costs of pensions are the amounts finally paid out to the employee during his lifetime after retirement. These ultimate costs may or may not be much greater for the newly hired older workers. It depends on the terms of the pension plan, and on future developments which, according to experience, are much more likely to affect the costs for the younger man over his longer period of working life than for the older man over his shorter period.

Two factors tend to lower the apparent costs of providing retirement benefits for persons hired at a younger age:

1. A younger person has a greater likelihood of dying, becoming disabled, or terminating employment, prior to retirement age.
2. Charges to current production expenses as contributions to a pension fund can be lower because they will accumulate and earn compound interest over a longer time.

Two countervailing factors of change tend to reduce age-cost differentials and may even balance them out. These are the extension of life expectancy, and the prospective increase in pension benefits. A large and increasing proportion of coverage under private pension contracts today calls for benefits related to future or final earnings. The trend towards continued increase in levels of earnings indicates the probability that pension benefits finally paid to younger new employees will be higher than would appear from their current earnings. Pension programs in many industries are gradually being changed to provide vesting after a specified number of years of service.

Private pension plans frequently provide for retirement at age 65 with extension beyond that age only through special and unusual action. (4) Yet it is generally recognized that 65 years is too young for many, too old for some. Where retirement is voluntary, many workers prefer to continue to 68 or 69. Later retirement would tend to shorten the period of benefit payments and so reduce the costs of pensions and may become economically necessary as the number of older workers continues to grow. The effect is substantial: with no increase in benefits, a normal retirement age

of 67 is assumed to cost 15 per cent less than one of 65. The direct effect of flexible or selective retirement on pension costs is sufficient reason for careful study of these matters. In addition, the effects on employee morale and on public relations deserve thoughtful consideration. (11)

The impression that the related benefits of group life insurance, workmen's compensation, and sickness and accident insurance during employment cost a great deal more for older workers is wrong. If benefits for dependents include maternity care, the package cost may even be less for the older person. Expressed in cents per man hour, whatever difference there is in current pension and insurance charges will turn out to be insignificant compared to the need for reliable new help.

A better perspective is to consider the question of age differentials in current charges for pensions and other benefits in relation to the "Compensation Package"-- the covered payroll and everything that goes with it. A major purpose of a pension-and-insurance program is to help improve the performance of the whole working force. Current charges for the pension-welfare program may be five or ten per cent of payroll, or more. Selective hiring of older new workers from the community can hardly add more than a small fraction of one per cent to the current annual charges for the compensation package, and may or may not add anything to the ultimate cost of pensions.

For the reasons cited above, it is seen that the cost of private pension and insurance benefits ought not to be considered a real obstacle to the employment of older workers. It is urged that employers re-examine their policies, and the practices of hiring officials, concerning age restrictions in hiring insofar as they are based on the argument of higher pension and insurance costs. This report makes it clear that such costs need not stand in the way of the traditionally sound policy of hiring on the basis of ability to do the job without regard to age.

Workmen's Compensation: It is often assumed that insurance rates to cover job-connected injuries are higher for older workers. The facts are otherwise. Available studies, as indicated earlier in this report, show that older workers have fewer accidents on the average. Rates are based on accident experience and since frequency rates would tend to be lower for older workers as a group, premiums would not be higher.

Firms that are self-insurers, however, have a different cost problem since their experience is not pooled with that of similar enterprises in establishing premium rates. Some Miami employers take the position that employers, especially self-insurers, cannot afford to take the chance of employing older persons afflicted with or disposed to ailments common to advancing age because of higher compensation costs. They mention especially persons with a heart condition, with varicose veins and arthritis.

The likelihood that employers and insurance carriers might be penalized in the case of accidents which aggravate pre-existing disabilities has been recognized for some time. In order to correct this situation the State Legislature in 1955 provided a "Special Disability Fund" for Workmen's Compensation. Now when a worker who has a pre-existing disability suffers an accident which aggravates the condition, the employer or carrier is liable only for the consequence of the accident which occurred in his employment and not for the total condition; the balance being financed from the special disability fund. For example, if an employee who has previously been blinded in one eye, regardless of the cause of the previous blindness, is blinded in the remaining eye by an industrial accident, the employer is liable only for the loss of sight in one eye and not for total blindness. The difference in compensation rates is financed from the special disability fund. This process removes one of the principal obstacles to the employment of disabled workers, including older workers. The proper utilization of this law, of course, requires that pre-existing conditions be recognized and recorded at the time of hire or time of occurrence, if the disability occurs during the period of employment. A good physical examination program with the records of disabilities kept in the personnel file would, of course, provide this protection in most cases.

Collective Bargaining Agreements

In view of the increasing number of workers whose employment is affected by collective bargaining agreements, the Secretary of Labor instigated a special analysis of such agreements as an auxiliary project to the Older Worker Study. (14, 15) Its purpose was to determine to what extent such agreements concerned themselves with the hiring, retention, job termination, and pension and insurance benefits of older workers. The special study examines major agreements covering the employment of nearly half of the nation's workers so employed.

It is found that most union contracts provide no preferential treatment and little protection against discrimination based on age in hiring but do provide greater job security for older employed workers through seniority provisions and other benefits. This combination of circumstances emphasizes the tragic situation of an older person who loses his job after building up considerable seniority in it.

In a few instances, clauses banning maximum hiring ages have been written to ease the older worker's entry. Some agreements require that a certain proportion of "hires" must be over a specified age. Transfer rights to less taxing jobs are provided in less than one per cent of the contracts.

Discharge or lay off based on age alone, without consideration of efficiency, is generally prohibited under union contracts. The rule of seniority is probably the most effective measure to protect an older worker's job

security. Lay offs and recalls of employees in metropolitan Miami are very commonly based primarily upon length of service and therefore upon age, but practically no firms appear to have a specific reserve pool of retired workers who can be recalled on a temporary basis at peak employment periods.

An analysis of life insurance plans provided for in labor agreements throughout the country indicates that nearly half of them extend such benefit to retired workers, usually in a reduced amount. Four out of five plans provided accident and sickness coverage and two out of three medical benefits, for active workers. Relatively few plans extended hospital and medical insurance to workers after retirement.

There is a general absence of provisions barring the participation in health and insurance plans of older workers but a reduction in the benefits under sickness coverage is not uncommon for workers over 60.

Placement by the Public Employment Service

The agency most directly concerned with the question of finding employment for older workers is, of course, the State Employment Service, operating in Florida under the Florida Industrial Commission under the guidance of the U. S. Department of Labor.

The Miami office of the Florida State Employment Service was one of seven in the country selected to conduct an experiment demonstrating what could be done to expand the placement of workers of 45 and over. The major objective of this phase of the Older Worker Study was the improvement of methods of service to older workers, including the development and testing of new or untried techniques. (3) Statistical data were sought only insofar as they measured the relative effectiveness of methods and techniques and point to those problem areas in which satisfactory solutions are wanting, or to the causes of the difficulties. Why do some older workers remain unemployed? Why do others find satisfactory employment? How does the Employment Service help this second group, or how did they help themselves in achieving vocational adjustment? What is required in terms of time, staff, and other facilities to provide effective service?

The desired end products were (1) findings translated into improved operating manuals and training materials which will increase the ability of staff to provide effective service, and (2) estimates of the staff time required.

The general method used was to identify relevant characteristics of older applicants, to identify the methods used, and to relate these characteristics and methods to criteria of placement, suitable employment, and job satisfaction. A sample of older workers selected at random by Social Security number digits was divided into an experimental group of 400 and a control

group similar in characteristics such as age distribution, sex, occupational distribution, industrial attachment, and unemployment compensation claim status. The experimental group was served by specially designated and trained staff members. A counselor and a selective placement interviewer were assigned full time to the project and achievement of the results in terms of job placement. Extra effort was also required of other staff members in job development. Group discussions of job finding by members of the experimental group proved most helpful.

Intensive service was continued from January through April. Information was gathered from local office records and through follow-up with the applicant regarding the current status of older workers in both groups. The experimental group was compared to the control group with respect to job placements, suitability of employment, whether employed or unemployed, job satisfaction as indicated by the applicant; the employed compared with the unemployed, the satisfied to the unsatisfied, those placed by the local office to those not placed by the local office in relation to (1) the characteristics of the applicants, and (2) the services provided. These statistical comparisons were evaluated in arriving at conclusions and recommendations.

Three auxiliary projects were pursued in conjunction with the Miami program for placing older workers. The first was a series of directed discussions by groups of 10 to 15 older workers of ways and means in which they could improve their job prospects. They welcomed this opportunity and the receipt of information about the local job market. The second was an arrangement made with a local hospital clinic to undertake a complete geriatric examination of a limited number of applicants over 60 to ascertain their physical and mental functioning in relation to potential employment. Finally, preliminary work was done in experimenting with a self-rating scale to determine the extent to which applicants in the upper age brackets were adjusted mentally and emotionally to advancing age. It was felt that such an index might be of value in gauging employability and morale.

The result of the intensive effort by the Miami office to find work for the 400 unemployed persons of 45 and over can be said to have been moderately successful. The results compare favorably with those achieved in the other six cities. A somewhat smaller percentage of those in the experimental group was placed in Miami than elsewhere by the Employment Service itself and the ratio of Employment Service placements from that group to those from the control group was smaller. On the other hand, Miami led in the ratio of experimental to control group applicants who obtained employment from any source. Greater success might have been obtained had adequate time been available. The extent to which added services were made available under the special program is graphically shown in Chart 7.

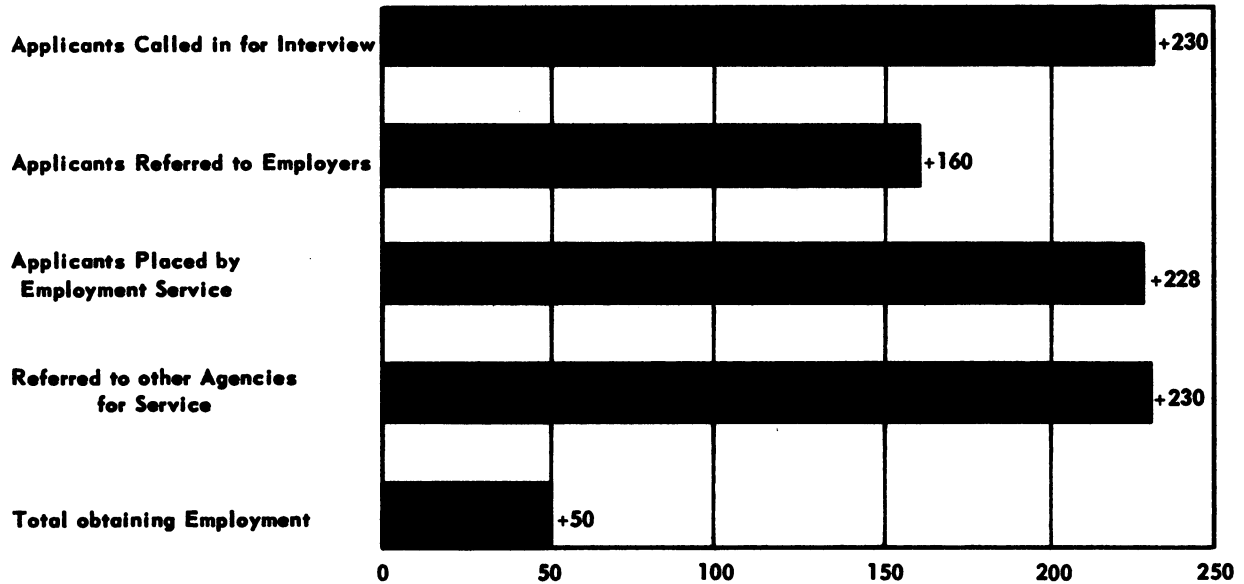
The record of placements made is a good one but may not indicate permanent, satisfying employment. Too few applicants reported they were placed in jobs they considered adequate, permanent, and satisfactory.

CHART 7

INTENSIVE EFFORT TO PLACE MIAMI OLDER WORKERS PAYS OFF

(Percentages of added services rendered 400 older workers in special
Experimental Group over that provided for 400 in Control Group)

Nature of Service or Action :



Note - Number of Counselling Interviews for Experimental Group were 580% higher

SOURCE: Table 33, Phase III, Older Worker Study

The achievement of the project seems to show that when an "all out" effort is made to place workers over 45, more of those who are fully employable can be placed. It indicates that older workers can be helped to an increasing extent provided that more time is made available for interviews, for counseling, referrals, and placement.

The experiment showed that the need for employment counseling increases with the age of the applicant. His problems increase with the number of obstacles he meets in the later years in seeking a job. The experience of the referral interviewer assigned to older applicants proves that much more job development activity is involved than is normally expected of a regular interviewer.

By way of a general review of specific results achieved in Phase III of the project it may be said that in consequence of specialized placement effort more than twice as many older applicants from the Experimental Group reported jobs obtained through the Employment Service as from the Control Group. Three and a third times as many separate placements were effected with the group given intensive service but many did not turn out to be in permanent or satisfactory jobs. About one-half of those in the experimental sample who reported by questionnaire said they had found employment in various ways at the close of the project as compared with little more than a third of those reporting from the Control Group. The morale which was generated by the experiment among the Experimental Group was higher at the end of the program than that apparent among Control Group members.

Numerous problems involved in a complex job market were identified or clarified by the Older Worker Study to the extent that somewhat more specific solutions can be applied. The Employment Service can do much in providing a fuller measure of work for those over 45, but optimum success appears to hinge on a nationwide program of increased understanding on the part of employers and the public.

Phase III of O. W. S. involved sizable expenditures largely because of the research, record keeping, and statistical aspects of the program. These are superimposed overhead costs rather than normal operating expenses involved in placing older workers. The time and cost of providing intensified service and placing 118 of a random sampling of 400 unemployed applicants of 45 years and over were only slightly higher than the standard under routine operation.

The volume of services rendered applicants over 45 in the Miami office is not in proportion to the size of that applicant group. During the past two years from 17 to 25 per cent of all applicants referred to employers were 45 and over. Placements of older workers were made in the same percentages. However, the percentage of all applicants served who are 45 and over

is nearly 50 per cent. Another comparison can be made on a national basis between the number of handicapped workers placed and those over 45 who are placed in jobs. It has been estimated that in proportion to their numbers, the prospects of placement through the Employment Service are six times better for the handicapped than for the older workers group.

The increased placements of older workers in seven cities resulting from intensified services in the rather short period of three months is attributed by the U. S. Department of Labor in considerable part to these factors: (3)

1. Individual job development by interviewers or Employment Service representatives who contacted employers. Nearly half of all placements were effected in this way. Greatest success was had with development of clerical and sales jobs.
2. Increased call-ins and interviews with applicants considered for job referral. In all cities 53% of the experimental group were called in; in Miami, 65%.
3. Encouraging employers to relax age restrictions in placing orders. Different areas met with varying success in this regard but Miami appears to have had a high percentage (65%) of success in this effort.
4. Intensive individual and group counseling to explore skills and potentialities, to assure proper occupational classification, provide labor market information, and develop a specific employment plan. More than a fifth of all those in the seven experimental groups received such counsel. About one ninth were offered testing service.
5. Staff clinics of those concerned to discuss "problem cases", review applicants' qualifications, and suggest possible action.

The composite study for all seven areas also showed that half or more of the age group 45 to 60 succeeded in finding work as compared with less than half of those 60-64 and 25 per cent of those over 65. Female applicants had somewhat greater success than male. Greatest success was met by those in skilled and semi-skilled occupations. Follow-up questionnaires sent to all members of both experimental and control groups in Miami indicated that 71 per cent of the former and 50 per cent of the latter felt the Employment Service had provided helpful service.

Employment Problems of the Over -65 Group

Only 19 per cent of the population of those 65 and over were employed in Miami in 1950 as compared with a national average of 25 per cent. The employed population of men over 65 throughout Florida is smaller in proportion than that of other states. The State of Florida had the lowest

percentage, 29.6, of men over the age of 65 who were employed at the time of the 1950 census. A low ratio is found particularly in Greater Miami.

The marked increase in the older bracket, now 11.2 per cent of the local population, is due only in part to persons who have definitely retired. It is true that old age social security beneficiaries are settling in Miami at the rate of about 2500 each year. There are now more than 35,000 retired workers, their wives, husbands or widows receiving old age benefits averaging \$62 a month residing here. In previous years the number of local social security beneficiaries reached its peak during the winter season. Since last year, however, there has been a steady and constant rise in the number of permanent beneficiaries locating in the area.

Many of these older persons are in need of supplementary income and desire full or part-time employment. (5,7) According to the Social Security Administration, less than half of the total income of Social Security beneficiaries is derived from such benefits. Employment is still the largest single source of income of persons over 65. While no income figures are available for Miami, it appears probable that the average income of 65-plus couples is not substantially higher than the national average of \$2300 and little more than is required for the level of minimum comfort. The proportion of well-to-do retirees in Miami is, of course, relatively high.

Adequate income for a reasonably satisfactory standard of living is essential in sustaining the prosperity of any area. The aged members of society contribute heavily to the composition of the low income population. In most age groups income is fairly well distributed, the group 35-44 have the highest income. This sum holds up until the age of retirement is reached when the average income goes down by 60 per cent.

The need for supplementary income by persons over 65 may be summarized by pointing out that 30 per cent of all families and 42 per cent of all unrelated individuals with money incomes under \$2,000 had heads aged 65 years or over in 1954. This represents more than five million families and individuals in the U. S.

The proportion of persons in Dade County receiving old age assistance is lower than elsewhere. About 60 per cent of the local population over 65 are drawing Social Security retirement benefits. However, the fact that thousands of applicants in that age bracket are seeking work at the Employment Service office suggests the need of additional job income for members of that group. The need may be less than that of the 45-64 age bracket, but is quite as vital to the sustained economy of an area in which an excess of aged persons furnishes a threat that too many may become a liability if public assistance becomes necessary.

Part-Time Work for Semi-Retired Persons: The Social Security Administration reports a seven per cent drop during the past seven years in the employment of men aged 65 and over. However, the Bureau of the Census conducted a survey in 1955 which indicates that part-time employment is increasing. (7) One-fifth of men in the older age bracket and more than a third of older women at work were on a part-time schedule generally less than 35 hours a week.

The Census Bureau infers that the number of part-time jobs available for older persons is going up. There is no evidence to indicate that this is the situation in the Miami area where the need for supplementary income on the part of semi-retired persons is greater than elsewhere because there are more of them. A few enterprises elsewhere in Florida are pioneering in the employment of older workers for a 20-hour week.

Far greater opportunities of this kind are needed. Part-time but continuing and regular employment for older women in the area can be expanded in retail stores, restaurants and hotels. The creation of jobs in such enterprises could be stimulated through a program of action on the part of local trade associations and could hardly be expected of the State Employment Service.

In the course of the Older Worker Study several instances were reported of hotels, motels and restaurants that were offering employment to persons over 65 at substandard rates of pay. Lower wages were offered older men for the same work expected of younger persons on the pretext that employment was being furnished which would still permit the applicants to retain their social security benefits since the wages were less than \$100 per month. Fortunately the number of such cases reported were relatively small.

Home Piece-Work for Older Women: Another field for part-time employment in manufacturing, especially for older women, which could be explored is that of home piece-work for such industries as embroidery, belt and buckle, gloves and mittens, women's apparel, jewelry, handkerchiefs, and hand-knitted wear. These are now rigidly policed by the Wage and Hour Division of the Department of Labor to prevent a return to sweatshop conditions.

Federal regulations, however, are restrictive and involve so many forms, reports, and procedures to maintain a minimum hourly wage and enforce a forty-hour week, as to prohibit in practice any casual or incidental home piece-work for older persons desiring to supplement their incomes. The minimum wage law is construed to mean that no individual can work at home under a contractual agreement and then sell his work to a manufacturer.

The principal of a minimum hourly wage and work week may be inapplicable to older persons working at home on piece-work at their own speed and convenience. The U. S. Labor Department could gather further information and consider recommendations for a change in wage and hour regulations which

will permit home piece-work by older workers and cut the present red tape without tearing down the protection which the law presently affords.

Minimum Wage Law: It may also be noted that the pending increase to \$1.00 an hour under the Minimum Wage and Hour Law may adversely affect the employment prospects of older persons. No objection can be raised to a minimum wage for fully productive workers at any age but what of those workers over 65 who can be employed at a more leisurely pace on work in which the production may not be worth the minimum rate?

Public Attitude Towards Aging

The foregoing sections have dealt with factors affecting the employment of older workers which are generally of a tangible or measurable nature. Barriers to employment are also due to ingrained public attitudes toward aging and older persons which arise not from facts but from beliefs. Public opinion about age is founded on prejudice and attitudes that have not kept pace with advances in science; it is bolstered with superstition.

In a fast changing world the accent is on youth in spite of the growth of the over-45 population. Growing old is confused with senility; deterioration as regarded as inevitable. Science is now proving otherwise but youth objects to any domination from age and wants to take over the throttle. Few persons are aware of the deep-seated unreasoning source of their critical attitude toward older persons.

Maturity needs tolerance, understanding, and an opportunity to make a living. It may be appropriate to concede the capacity of older persons to contribute to our economic and cultural progress and thereby sidestep the pitfalls their growing members present.

6. SUMMARY FINDINGS OF THE OLDER WORKER STUDY

The foregoing sections of this memorandum have presented factual evidence relative to the employment and employability of workers aged 45 and over with particular reference to the metropolitan Miami labor market. These facts are believed to be essential to the community, especially employers and the State Employment Service, in determining a course of action to meet the problems involved.

The significant data about older workers may be summarized as follows:

1. The proportion of older residents in the Miami area has increased faster than the population as a whole. From 1940 to 1955 the total population increased 162 per cent, but the population 45 years and over increased 197 per cent.

2. On the other hand, Greater Miami employs proportionately fewer mature and experienced workers of which it is amassing an ample supply. Local employers are utilizing a smaller proportion of workers age 45 and over than the nation as a whole and, specifically, fewer than the six other communities covered in the study.
3. The larger business establishments in the Miami area do not utilize as many older workers as the smaller ones. Workers over 45 constitute only 17 per cent of employment in firms with 5,000 or more workers whereas they represent 34 per cent of employment with firms of less than 50 employees.
4. The disproportionate increase in the older population has introduced an unusual and potentially dangerous factor into the economy of the area. It creates a new kind of surplus in the labor market.
5. The proportion of older applicants at the Miami Employment Service offices is steadily increasing. More than half of the total group of applicants are over age 45. These older applicants only obtained 22 per cent of the jobs filled by the Employment Service during the period of the study, however.
6. The labor turnover rate in the Miami metropolitan area is 107 per cent per year. This is two and one-half times as great as the average of the seven cities surveyed. In all of the cities including Miami, however, turnover rates were found to be much lower for older than for younger workers. In fact, turnover rates are twice as high for workers under age 25 as for those from 45 to 64.
7. Employee turnover is excessive and costly. The high turnover rate is caused for the most part by younger workers and to some extent by inadequate opportunities for stable and continued employment in a fast expanding business economy.
8. Most of the smaller business establishments do not appear to maintain personnel records regarding their workers adequate to provide information to determine labor costs and personnel policies.
9. The setting of maximum age limits by employers in placing job orders is one of the most significant of the entire study in pointing up the employment problem of older workers. Of orders received in the Miami employment offices nearly 73 per cent carried upper age restrictions. Furthermore, restrictions placed by Miami employers for workers under 45 were more numerous than for any of the other cities. Restrictions were greatest for unskilled, service and clerical jobs and more frequently specified by the larger firms.

10. Employability is too commonly based on arbitrary chronological age limits. In reality there is no fixed age at which a worker becomes too old to work. In actual practice these restrictions are determined by individual employers and often applied without reference to the individual job seeker's qualifications. The prevalence of artificial age barriers in hiring becomes more serious because of the greater longevity and aging composition of the population, especially in metropolitan Miami.
11. Miami employers apparently prefer younger to older workers judging from a comparative age distribution of the employed and unemployed. Workers under 45 represent less than 1 out of 2 of the unemployed, but nearly 7 out of 10 of the employed workers. Among persons over 65 the unemployed are proportionately nearly three times as numerous as the employed.
12. Relatively few local employers make a special effort to employ workers over age 45 but a substantial number take steps to retain older workers that have made good. There is little evidence that employers are setting up any systematic program for selecting mature applicants, although they do not hesitate to voice their praise of the performance and production of older workers already employed.
13. Local employers appear to be reluctant to hire older workers mainly because of a fear that their physical fitness or performance may not be adequate. This was indicated by employers who cooperated in the study. Mention of pension and insurance costs occurred infrequently although it is usually considered a major barrier to mature employment. Many of the reasons given had little relationship to age as such.
14. Such objective evidence as is available of the ability of older workers to meet the physical requirements of the job indicates a gradual decrease in physical and mental capacity through the years. There is no particular age at which people generally suffer a decline in working ability. There are great variations between individuals in the age to which they retain full working efficiency. As workers become older they do suffer a decline in strength, endurance and agility. In spite of this they have fewer absences because of accidents and illnesses than younger workers, although these absences last longer when they do occur. The highest accident rate does not occur among older workers but in the 35 to 44 age bracket.
15. On the other side of the ledger some of the possible liabilities may be offset. Objective evidence obtained in the course of the older worker study shows that a senior worker may have

many traits which justify his consideration for employment. He may work slower but makes fewer mistakes. He is likely to be prompt and reliable. He seldom asks for time off and stays on the job longer than younger workers. He has a sense of responsibility and is less likely to give trouble. His judgment is based on experience. Increased skill and accuracy combined with physical fitness recommend him as a better employee. The assets may outweigh the liabilities but every applicant has his own balance sheet which must be analyzed by the prospective employer.

16. It therefore appears there is no chronological age at which competent performance ceases; the individual personality sets the limit. Employers throughout the country indicate that more than half of workers over 45 turn out an average or better than average quantity of production. On quality, older workers are rated even higher. This opinion was voiced by a considerable number of Miami employers who expressed an opinion.
17. As to the 2 000 local job seekers interviewed about their work experience of the past 3 years it is clear that the individual problem of maintaining steady employment grows with advancing age. Unemployment may increase in duration and frequency. This is especially true in the 55-64 age bracket for men and at a lower age for women.
18. Older workers in certain occupations or lines of business may be more likely to find themselves out of work than in others, but such differences are subordinate to the basic fact that they are aging. Unemployment of older workers is marked in the service industries and also serious among skilled and semi-skilled workers, largely because employment is unstable in many firms.
19. Substantially greater employment stability is shown in the work history of persons over age 45. They are more likely to continue on one job for a long period of time. This is not the case with younger job seekers. When the length of service of employed workers in the area is compared with the duration of the last job held by the job seekers interviewed, it is startling to discover that the stability of those over 45 seeking work is actually greater than those who are currently employed. For the entire seven areas surveyed only 11 per cent of those under 45 were employed by one firm for ten years or more, as compared with 45 per cent of the older workers (45 and over).

20. Older applicants for work lose little time from the labor force because of inability to work or because they do not have to. There is less likelihood of their changing jobs or moving from one area to another.
21. Half of the local unemployed are relatively new arrivals. In fact, most of Miami's population consists of in-migrants. This was the case with most of the employed workers in recent years. Mature applicants who seek to establish themselves here represent a better than average cross-section of the nation's labor supply.
22. Job seekers in metropolitan Miami are in no sense "drifters", "job hoppers", or unemployable, even though nearly half of them are real newcomers to the area. More older workers are settling permanently in the area than are younger persons.

Three-fifths of job seekers over age 45 have lived in the area for more than 6 years. 2 out of 5 have owned their own homes here or elsewhere. Despite this fact, high percentages of older residents are unemployed for considerable periods of time. The extent of the unemployment of older permanent residents constitutes an economic hindrance to the continued prosperity of the area.

23. Older job seekers are willing to spend more time in traveling to and from work than younger workers.
24. Provisions of private pension plans and related insurance "benefits" are frequently cited by employers as barriers to the employment of older workers. A committee of leading national authorities on pensions appointed by the Secretary of Labor made a report as part of the Older Worker Study which indicates that fears of excessive costs are to a considerable extent not justified. They appear to constitute more of a "bugaboo" than an actuality.
25. In metropolitan Miami some 40 per cent of employed workers are now eligible for private pension benefits upon retirement; this is lower than the 66 per cent of workers under pension plans in all seven cities. By far the highest proportion of workers included within pension plans are found in the 25-44 age bracket. It appears that only 1 in 10 of all "pension covered" workers in the area in the 45 and over age bracket is in line for benefits at the normal retirement age of 65. Most older workers in the area, therefore, will have to be content with Social Security allotments. This fact has a detrimental impact on the economy of the area.

26. The real and ultimate costs of pensions are the amounts finally paid out to the employee after his retirement. A further extension of life expectancy and prospective increases in pension benefits will tend to increase the ultimate pension cost for younger workers. A modest supplementary pension such as could be earned in 10 or 15 years under most pension formulas would not subject the employer to unfavorable criticism and would place the worker in a better economic position than if he were not covered by a private pension plan.
27. Selective hiring of older workers can therefore hardly add more than a small fraction of one per cent to the current annual charges for the over-all "compensation package". Costs need not stand in the way of the sound policy of hiring on the basis of ability to do the job without regard to age.
28. Collective bargaining agreements, aside from their inclusion of provisions for a pension plan, do not concern themselves to any great extent with the employment or retention of older workers. Most union contracts provide no preferential treatment and little protection against discrimination based on age in hiring but do provide greater security for employed workers through seniority and other benefits.
29. That phase of the older worker study concerned with conducting an experiment as to what can be done to expand the placement of workers of 45 and over definitely proved both in Miami and in 6 other cities that such results can be achieved. The Miami office succeeded in placing 2-1/2 times as many workers from a randomly selected group of unemployed over 45 as would ordinarily have been placed. The record in other cities was even better.
30. The Employment Service can do much in providing more adequate employment for those over 45. Optimum success hinges on an expansion of staff and a nationwide program of increased recognition of the older worker problem on the part of employers and the public. The special placement program undertaken locally succeeded because of the increased use of individual job development, increased interviews with applicants before job referral, and intensive counseling to explore skills, provide labor market information and develop specific employment plans. Conspicuous success was met by the local office in encouraging employers to relax age restrictions in placing orders.
31. Many older persons over 65 are in need of supplementary income and desire full or part-time employment. The proportion of the

older age bracket who are employed is smaller in metropolitan Miami than elsewhere. The 65 and over age bracket now embraces 11.2 per cent of the local population. The public Employment Service is expected to provide employment for persons of any age but the problem of maintaining continued employment for the 45-65 age bracket is of far greater size than that of the 65 plus group.

32. Greater opportunities for full and part-time employment and constructive purposeful activity are needed in the community for persons in the later years. To an increasing extent this becomes a challenge to all community organizations and agencies rather than a matter of primary concern to the Employment Service.
33. Balanced Growth of Local Economy Requires More Employment of Older Workers: All forecasts indicate a further industrial expansion of metropolitan Miami. The State Employment Service should take the lead in employee recruitment for this growth.

The prospective expansion raises the question of how much of the necessary labor supply should be recruited locally from the over 45 population. In order to maintain the purchasing power of the Miami market and assure a continuance of adequate per capita income for an aging population, is it not logical for the Employment Service and employers to collaborate to the utmost in using the available skills of the over 45 group?

Businessmen in the area are exuberant over the apparently assured prospects of a much greater population within the next two decades but only occasional fears have been expressed of the possibility of unbalanced economic development. Little mention has been made of the factors influencing the development of the area's labor supply, a primary consideration for every employer.

The desirability of employing more older workers in Greater Miami should not be advanced on grounds of sentimental or respectful recognition for our aging forbears, even though that would be a considerate gesture. Grey hair and wrinkles justify respect only when they are accompanied by knowledge or ability.

Economic necessity is the true local issue in the question of age in relation to hiring. The utilization of workers of 45 and over offers a common sense solution in the situation in which the community finds itself.

If the older population is not permitted to contribute to the productivity of the area, those who are now from 15 to 40 years of age will in another 20 years be faced with an intolerable tax burden and expense to support an equal number of older dependents. A basic question is whether Greater Miami is going to look upon its older population as standard usable equipment or just a fifth wheel on the wagon.

The Wall Street Journal has recently devoted substantial space to questions of aging and retirement, thus reflecting the concern of "big business" over these matters. A recent article had this to say: "Taxpayers have a stake in current management decisions on retirement policies. The Social Security Administration estimates that even if present benefits are left unchanged and all workers retire at 65, Social Security costs will zoom to \$11.3 billion annually by 1970 compared with \$1.1 billion in 1950. The lengthening life expectancy of the average American and the growing number of persons in the 65 and over age bracket will spell ever increasing taxes unless more of these older workers are kept on the job."

For the most part the problem of the older worker has not received enough detailed or careful study by employers in the area; employment policies have been vaguely formulated on the basis of personal opinion or of particular situations faced within a given firm or industry. Employer attitudes in relation to hiring practices are just as important as the customary practices followed at the moment.

The Older Worker Study undertaken in Miami appears to disclose for the first time that local economic development in one of its aspects is already imbalanced. The lure of sunshine and booming business has resulted in and will continue bringing in a disproportionate number of persons aged 45 and over in need of employment. The conclusion appears inescapable that business interests which have unconsciously helped create these inconsistencies in the composition of the area's labor supply should be willing, in the interests of a sound economy, to make adjustments in their hiring policies.

7. WAYS AND MEANS OF INCREASING THE EMPLOYMENT OF MATURE WORKERS

Barriers to the employment of persons of age 45 and over are not insurmountable. In communities where a concerted effort has been made to ease them, older worker placements have increased substantially. This has resulted from widespread community participation in an over-all program for greater recognition of the potential of age, the interested cooperation of management and labor, and an aggressive placement program by the State Employment Service.

What the Employer Can Do

For the employer the stakes in this untapped pool of labor are high. The hiring of older workers has its problems but in metropolitan Miami these may prove less troublesome in many cases than placing a primary accent on youth. Carefully selected job applicants over 45 may be "the cream of the crop".

Employers who appreciate the significance of the socio-economic problem involved may very properly ask themselves a number of questions regarding their present practice and policy and take steps to adjust them.

1. Do I have a consistent, up-to-date policy for hiring and retaining workers based upon their ability to perform regardless of age? Have I abandoned unrealistic age limitations? Do actual hiring and retention practices conform with such policies?

An answer to these questions involves a re-examination of present policy and practice and of attitudes toward the potential of older workers on the part of the organization. A positive policy should be adopted and vigorously stated in writing; ability should be stressed regardless of age.

2. How can I be sure that those concerned with employment and separation of workers -- personnel officers and supervisors -- will carry out the policy of the company? Publicizing such a policy, circulating it among employees, and posting it on bulletin boards will build morale and make for improved public relations. Supervisors should be encouraged to place the policy into effect and evaluate older workers realistically.
3. Do I have an adequate record of the performance requirements of each of my jobs? How can I determine actual performance requirements? How can I improve the selection of competent older workers?

Rising labor costs in industry and the need for maximum labor utilization today indicate that more attention needs to be given to selective screening of applicants with good past employment records. In an expanding industrial economy "hit or miss" methods may be costly.

For employment in new industries, job requirements may not yet be standardized and employers (as well as the Employment Service) may need to devise more precise selection criteria. In the employment of older workers it will be worthwhile to devote ample care and time to insure that prospects possess qualifications of skill, experience, and physical fitness that are needed. If the necessary skills are not locally available, it may be possible to effect an adaptation or transference of related skills from the existing labor supply.

The type of skills particularly needed for the prospective expansion of types of small manufacturing industry in the area are those in which there is also a shortage elsewhere. Some of the special skills which may be required in the industrial field can doubtless be supplied by retraining mature workers with suitable aptitudes and with related skills.

4. Am I using the expanded facilities of the Employment Service in recruiting older workers? That service has job analysts to assist in establishing performance requirements and employment counselors to help appraise the capacity of mature workers.
5. Am I retaining workers approaching retirement but who wish to continue working and are physically and mentally able to work in suitable jobs? Should my compulsory retirement policy be relaxed?

An answer to these questions involves a re-evaluation of pension and retirement plans. It may be found desirable to permit qualified workers to remain on the job. More precise estimates regarding the actual cost of existing pension plans and insurance benefits will be needed. Ultimate costs may be far more important than present expenditures. Pension-insurance companies should be encouraged to ease age restrictions in the hiring of older workers by their clients.

6. What can I do to utilize newly hired and presently employed older workers more effectively? What can be done in the way of transfer to other work or retraining?

Employment of mature workers need not involve dismissal, downgrading, or retirement of loyal employees. Job engineering for older workers is a new development in industrial engineering and has resulted in cost reduction and improved output in many instances. Such activity may involve rescheduling the pace of production, improving the ease in handling materials and equipment, or changing it to avoid strain.

What the Employment Service Can Do

The experience of the Miami and other employment offices in stepping up the placement of older workers has demonstrated the need for a definite expansion of employment service activities in their behalf. A start has already been made in this direction. A new position at the Florida State level has been established to coordinate service in this field. An experienced counselor in the Miami office has been designated to oversee activities for mature applicants. Similar positions are to be provided in employment offices in other larger Florida cities.

The following suggestions relative to the public Employment Service have resulted from the Older Worker Study:

1. Far more of the older applicants should be given selective placement, employment counseling, and job development services than heretofore. A "specialized but integrated service" is being provided without the setting up of a separate section. Certain individuals should be assigned to specialize in older worker placement.
2. Substantially more time must be allowed for application taking, counseling, and placement per individual than is allowed for younger applicants. In practice it is found that many older applicants require at least 50 per cent more time and effort in order to properly evaluate their past work history and present capacity. At present, the budgets of local public employment offices are based on the number of placements and other workload items accomplished. Volume has therefore been a goal. With older workers quality must be considered more. Effective and appropriate placement of older workers requires adequate manpower allowing more adequate unit times for serving older workers.
3. More numerous as well as longer counseling interviews are needed. Older workers and those with whom they are associated both need to have a clearer understanding of the changes and attitudes which result from the aging process and from human relationships. They also need to recognize the rapid changes which are taking place in the world of work and the importance of adjusting themselves to such changes.

Group and individual counseling enable older unemployed persons to appraise their potentialities and to do some serious constructive thinking about their future. Individual counseling is ordinarily required to bring out the unique pattern of characteristics of the individual concerned - his training, skills, aptitudes, preferences and interests, all of which may need a systematic reappraisal when he finds himself out of work after the age of 45.

Consideration should be given to the preparation of a brief folder to provide general information regarding employment opportunities for transient job seekers in the Miami area. This might save considerable time and much explanation on the part of interviewers and possibly eliminate many casual applicants who may decide that finding local employment is too much of an effort. Such a pamphlet would give information as to the distribution of jobs by occupation, industry and age, information as to wages, residence requirements, living costs, etc.

4. Changes in the attitudes and practice of local employment offices will be helpful. An interest and enthusiasm on the part of the staff can be generated through staff conferences and training in basic techniques with special emphasis on their application to older workers. Greater exercise of discrimination in making referrals and placements will be required than is ordinarily the case with younger applicants for whom a lesser work history is evaluated.
5. Relaxation or removal of upper age limits in taking orders and in discussing the qualifications of individual workers with employers should be further encouraged. Until now most orders have been accepted without question as to arbitrary age restrictions. Experience demonstrates that arbitrary restrictions can be substantially reduced in volume.
6. A widescale and carefully planned promotional program must be undertaken to inform employers and the public as to the potential of older workers. Such activity will need to be planned and coordinated on a national scale by the U. S. Department of Labor.

All available media in the community, including press, radio, television, and public speaking engagements, should be used to publicize the abilities and qualifications of older workers. The program should be brought to the attention of employer and union organizations, Chambers of Commerce, and significant civic groups in the community, through such means as educational institutes and forums and distribution of promotional materials. Organizations of older workers should be kept informed and utilized, where possible, in the distribution of promotional materials.

7. Further information must be developed at national, state and local levels for use in improving placement practice and in meeting public attitudes adverse to older workers. Further study is needed as to the performance and capacity of older workers. The Employment Service needs further data as to the extent with which mature applicants are being referred to jobs and placed. Standard report forms should be modified to provide basic information needed in order that policies and practice may be improved. The Workmens Compensation Commission should be asked to consider further study of the effect of the employment of older workers upon compensation costs, particularly to self-insurers.

It appears that the Miami Employment Service must not only be prepared to continue something of a mass production job in placement in a fast expanding economy, but will need to improve the quality of its service as well. It involves the interested support of the local Employment Service office staff, adequately trained as to the purposes, methods, and procedures needed to carry out such a program. Older workers cannot be effectively served unless more time and manpower is made available. An expansion of selective placement, counseling, and job development is impossible with the use of the present yardstick as to cost of service rendered. The question of appropriate budget allotments for Florida is particularly important since Employment Service budgets are directed from Washington with little reference to the abnormal expansion in volume anticipated in the area.

What the Community Can Do

The maintenance of a stable work force, free from artificial age limitations, concerns the community and the general public as well as employers and the State Employment Service. It involves the development of more understanding and tolerance for aging persons and recognition of their potential. Greater economic security for the older population will make for a happier community and add to the prestige of the community.

1. An expansion of the employment of persons 45 and over needs to be sparked by active working committees appointed by the various local Chambers of Commerce, church groups, and trade and labor associations. As indicated in the foregoing section, a continued drive, substantially more aggressive than that which has been undertaken with the handicapped, will be needed for success. The active interest and assistance of the press and other communication facilities is naturally essential.

2. Activities of the Senior Citizens' Division of the Welfare Planning Council can become of vital importance in influencing public attitudes and in stimulating special activities, especially for the over 65 group.
 - a. The 40 plus Club idea, by which older job seekers band together to help each other find work, should be given further local encouragement.
 - b. Another worthwhile community development would be for the Welfare Council and the State Employment Service to collaborate in the organization of a senior consultants' project similar to that in Nassau County, New York, which provides business consulting service of various kinds and assists in finding employment for its members. This is largely recruited from the retired executive group.
 - c. The local Welfare Planning Council should seek to interest a group of citizens in setting up a project similar to Senior Achievement, Inc., of Chicago, which has embarked on an extensive small manufacturing and service project for workers over 65. They work for a 20-hour week to supplement Social Security benefits. Part-time employment for oldsters is negligible in the Miami area and in Florida.
 - d. Welfare agencies in New York City and a few other cities have established sales outlets for handcraft made at home by elderly persons.
 - e. The Welfare Council Committee can render other services to assist beneficiaries of old age assistance in becoming self-sustaining and to keep other aging persons from being eventually forced to fall back on public or private relief. This will avoid trends for the organization of politically-minded "pressure groups" of older persons to obtain higher benefits. State and federal facilities for rehabilitation of older persons should be more fully used.
3. The Board of Public Instruction can play an important part by providing expanded adult educational and training facilities. The excellent program at Lindsey Hopkins Vocational School can be amplified.

Lack of education and training on the part of some older workers makes them unable to meet the requirements of a changing

labor market. The development of additional resources should be stimulated at the state and federal level and carried out locally. An outstanding example of achievement in the retraining of older workers is the "refresher" program for older stenographers and typists conducted by the New York House of Industry, through which 80 per cent of the trainees are able to find employment.

4. The existence of a mature labor supply should be regarded as a potential resource rather than a handicap in the future development of the community. The Chamber of Commerce and civic organizations can use it as a sales promotion argument--experience and "know-how" in a wide variety of occupations is already available in the area to meet the needs of many kinds of industries. Existing skills can be adapted to specialized needs or brief retraining courses can be initiated. The experience of the State Employment office in Ft. Lauderdale in recruiting 108 engineers and draftsmen, of whom 45 ranged in age from 45 to 72 years, in the area within a few weeks time is an indication of the older labor resource available in southeast Florida.

Barriers to the employment and social acceptance of advancing age can be surmounted by cooperative effort on the part of employers, the community, and the public Employment Service. It is hoped this report will be of value in assisting metropolitan Miami to decide whether its older population is to be regarded as standard usable equipment or just a fifth wheel on the wagon.