

ploring and developing their full potential simply because of their chronological age and because society no longer expects this of them. . . . Old age is traditionally a time for the cultivation of eccentricities, and radicalism is not the prerogative of the young . . .

The attainment of these improvements can be brought about by the nation accepting that these are not just idealistic concepts but merely a starting point for action. And the time for starting is now."

## **BRIEFS**

### **Canada:**

The Canadian government has agreed that the New Horizons program, started on an experimental basis in 1972, should have full program status. Through this program, the government provides groups of elderly with grants to embark on programs to benefit themselves and other seniors in the community. Since 1972, 3,280 projects have been funded costing \$18,147,410 and involving 676,802 persons. The program has been extremely popular and the government is recommending a \$4 million increase to the program for 1975-76. There are some restrictions on the use of these monies — e.g. they cannot be used to remunerate participating seniors or for capital expenditures. (*National Pensioner and Senior Citizens News*, April, 1975)

### **Czechoslovakia:**

- The increasing number of aging persons in Czechoslovakia has resulted in the introduction of the geriatric nurse who generally works for two physicians covering a catchment area of 7,600 people. Her main task is home nursing but she is also responsible for identifying the elderly in need and liaising with the social worker of the district national committee. This service has already resulted in a decrease in the number of hospital admissions and an earlier placement of patients who need hospital or long-term care. Hospital wards specializing in geriatric care and rehabilitation have been opened and day centers attached to hospitals are planned.

- In social services, there are at present 9,000 elderly persons to every social worker. It is hoped to improve this ratio to 1,000 persons to every social worker by 1990. Social centers are being planned for every 11,400 persons.

- Housing for the elderly in rural areas has been a special problem where only 20% live in apartments with all conveniences. This is being remedied by building more apartments for the elderly and for families wishing to take care of an elderly person. The government has proposed that the same allowances and benefits paid to families who take care of small children be extended to those who take care of their elderly.

For those elderly inhabiting inadequate housing, there are centers for bathing, hair washing and chiropody they can attend. The larger centers also provide free temporary accommodation to individuals whose apartment is being modernized or redecorated. (Excerpts from a paper given

by Dr. Hana Hermanova at Age Concern England's Manifesto Conference, *Age Concern Today*, Winter, 1974)

### **France:**

- The office responsible for monitoring the organization and effectiveness of government ministries concerned with social welfare (l'Inspection générale des Affaires sociales) has published a report — the Bardeau report — on preventive services, part of which is concerned with aging.

The inspectorate found that despite a general consensus that the aged should continue to participate fully in society and have access to services which might minimize some of the degenerative aspects of aging, the actual implementation of effective programs have the character of demonstration projects only reaching a minority of the population in need. This is due to lack of leadership and coordination among those responsible for services to the aging, the difficulty of implementing services designed in urban areas in rural communities, the lack of adequate personnel in central offices and reliable information, the absence of adequate definitions of terms like "day care" centers, which should have been established at a much more rapid rate than has actually taken place, and sometimes the lack of enthusiasm for implementing necessary programs.

The report recommends the "democratization" of aging, meaning that all kinds of preventive services should be introduced much earlier in life so that persons of differing social and economic backgrounds can reach old age in relatively good physical and mental health. Specifically, the report urges regular health examinations linked to the workers' medical system beginning at age 45. At retirement, a psychological examination should be given in order to advise the retiree on the best way of living his retirement. Much more attention needs to be given to pre-retirement education by both employers and employees. Clubs for the aged must provide meaningful social roles and intergenerational contacts to their members. And the aging must be given an active role in developing policies and programs affecting their lives. (*Notre Temps*, Feb., 1975)

- The Association for Residences for the Aged (AREPA) has developed a home help service in the Paris area to maintain the elderly within these residences for as long as feasible and minimize moves to more intensive care facilities. Although only the "well-aged" are admitted to these residences, over time frailties and weaknesses begin to appear which may require outside assistance in order to continue to cope. Each resident manager tries to find qualified personnel from the immediate neighborhood to perform necessary chores. Because elderly residents are concentrated in one facility, the home help is able to use her time much more efficiently than if they were scattered throughout the community. In addition, these residences are usually located near commercial centers which also facilitates shopping and other external chores for the home help.

The existence of this service has resulted in avoiding hospitalization for many elderly residents and shortening such stays where they do occur. Many who have become greatly handicapped are able to stay in their familiar environment, surrounded by friends, rather than move to an

institution. The AREPA has been successful in obtaining governmental subsidies to provide this service; where this has not been possible, it has absorbed all or part of the costs. (*L'Aide à Domicile*, April, 1975)

### Germany:

- Conscientious objectors to military service are allowed by the Federal Government to provide civilian service to the elderly, handicapped and other vulnerable groups in society. Until recently, such service was performed in social welfare establishments, such as hospitals and nursing homes. Now, the city of Hamburg is in the process of creating 100 positions to serve the aging and handicapped in all parts of the city. These civilian service corps members perform in-home tasks, such as housecleaning, window-washing, sidewalk sweeping, marketing, emptying the trash, bringing in fuel, and for those with difficulty in walking, accompaniment on walks. They also help organize social events, trips and access to library facilities. The program seems to be successful. In the first 6 months of operation, only 1 complaint has been registered.

The Federal Government does not provide any special training, but some local jurisdictions do give first-aid courses and some general background information. At the request of civilian corps members, training in conducting discussions with the elderly is being planned. (*Aktiver Lebensabend*, Jan., 1975)

- Professor Hans Franke of the Wurzburg University Polyclinic has published his results of a study of centenarians in West Germany. He found that centenarians do not die of old age, but most commonly, from some infection. They tend to come from families with a pattern of longevity, but in addition they drink coffee, tea, and moderate quantities of alcohol, enjoy a sex life until age 80 and possess a desire to live to old age. Their blood pressures corresponded to those of persons 71-80 years old. (*Aktiver Lebensabend*, October, 1974)

- A fund for building a retirement residence or nursing home in Grunberg/Oberhessen has an interesting provision. Any citizen wishing to establish a right to live in such a residence can pay into the fund all or part of the cost of putting up one apartment or unit. If he later decides not to personally avail himself of the residence, he will receive a proportional share of the proceeds from rentals. (*Presse-und Informationsdienst*, March/April, 1975)

- A new senior center sponsored by the German Red Cross in Hamburg-Ottensen includes a boarding house for elderly requiring a temporary residence. Reasons for such a transient stay include the departure of relatives on vacation or illness on the part of the individual taking care of an elderly person. Reading and hobby rooms, as well as a fully equipped workshop, ensure variety and stimulation to tenants. (*Presse-und Informationsdienst*, March/April, 1975)

- The Bayer plant in Leverkusen found that it was obtaining very good attendance from white-collar workers at evening discussions on the subject of "What is it like to

grow old?" In order to encourage the participation of blue-collar workers, as well, the company is organizing similar discussions in the plant itself during rest breaks, using as experts people who are considered the workers' peers. (*Presse-und Informationsdienst*, March/April, 1975)

### Netherlands:

- At the Lucan Institute, a modern psycho-geriatric day-care home in Breda, priority is given to the values held by elderly patients from choice of furniture to religious beliefs. Dr. Cees van Tiggelen, the medical director, wants expertise and professionalism to be used only to assist, never to create barriers between the staff and the patients. He believes the knowledge of human nature should be a prime prerequisite of nurses' training. A reflection of this philosophy is the eclectic decor of the home to which patients have contributed many of their old furnishings and bric-a-brac. In interactions with patients, staff emphasize what the elderly person knows and still can do rather than his disfunctions. (*Op Leeftijd*, Jan., 1975)

- The Netherlands has a unique law which defines all domiciles inhabited by more than four aged persons as a home for the aged. They then become subject to stringent governmental regulation. The effect of this law according to W. A. Schreuder of the Netherlands Union of Homes for the Aged is that hotels and boarding houses do not represent a viable housing alternative for the elderly. These establishments don't like being called "old age homes" or wish to become subject to strict governmental regulation. Some only accept old people if they sign a declaration of their intent to leave at age 65. Sometimes, they are merely thrown out when they reach that age. This disincentive built into the law diminishes the number of intermediate facilities available to the aging between independent living in their own home and some kind of special service apartment or institution. (*Op Leeftijd*, Feb., 1975)

### South Africa:

The Government of South Africa provides generous subsidies to welfare organizations for the construction and operation of service centers for the aging. To be eligible for subsidies, a service center must provide a minimum number of services, such as opportunities for socializing, recreational and educational programs, meals, including meals on wheels, health services, group work and handicrafts, and a library and consultation service. Such centers must be open at least five days a week and for not less than 30 hours a week. Financial subsidies include:

1. a 100% loan at 1% interest, repayable at 1¼% capital redemption over a period of 40 years;
2. a subsidy of 75% of the purchase price of furniture and equipment, including vehicles for meals on wheels;
3. a subsidy of 50% of the approved current expenditures.

(*Senior News*, Dec., 1974)

### Sweden:

Sweden has the highest proportion of elderly to general population in the world. Almost 19% of its population is

retired. A study conducted in western Sweden to determine what retired persons most wanted to do if they had the opportunity "found that senior citizens very literally wanted to keep on the move. In order of preference they liked to exercise, first their bodies and then their minds in study circles, then travel and finally keep their hands moving by making handicrafts. Only 10% of those interviewed, however, expressed a desire to hold a full-time job after reaching the age of retirement."

About 2/3 of Swedish local governments maintain special day centers for the retired and organize a wide range of active programs for them. An important goal of these programs is to encourage the young to work with the old. (*News from Sweden*, April, 1975)

### United Kingdom:

- Since 1967 the Glasgow Retirement Council has run a Part-Time Employment Bureau for the Retired operated by volunteers. Despite relatively high unemployment in the area, the Bureau was successful in placing 60% of its applicants in part-time work during the last year. The best publicity was found to be advertisements in the *Journal of the Chamber of Commerce* and through the Chamber of Trade. Advertisements in the general press were more effective for attracting prospective employees than employers. Nearly all business is conducted by telephone. Efforts are made to provide an employer with the names and addresses of 3-4 applicants within 24 hours of his call.

In Glasgow the experience has been that almost all retired persons who expressed a desire to work came into the Employment Bureau to register. Many more men than women have registered and the former have been successfully employed in jobs such as messengers, security guards, etc. Former executives are usually happy to find some non-demanding work, such as postal clerks. (Glasgow Retirement Council's *Report on Experience up to 24th April, 1974.*)

- A new organization known as the British Association for Service to the Elderly has been formed to cover the practical aspects of this subject. Societies already exist which cover the gerontological, geriatric and sociological aspects of aging. The Director is Miss Marjorie Bucke. (*Age Concern Today*, Winter, 1974)

- British Rail has issued a discount card to pensioners allowing them to purchase as many single and return rail tickets for mid-week travel as they wish at half the second class ordinary full fare. The concession is also extended to foreigners resident in the U.K. drawing a pension from abroad. The scheme will be reexamined in one year to determine if it should be continued or any modifications made. (*Pre-Retirement Choice*, May, 1975)

- A retired British executive, John Lee, was so enchanted with the idea of a toy library for children that he saw in Denmark, that he obtained permission from city of Brighton to open one in a local library, employing elderly persons to make and repair the toys. With an initial government grant for stocks of toys and tools, the toy library serves 1500 children and employs a workshop of four

elderly men and six women working in shifts for a small remuneration. 400 toys go out each week. Lee was inundated with offers from older persons wishing to assist in his enterprise. (*YOURS*, March, 1975)

- The British government has liberalized its retirement test so that pensioners can earn up to 20£ (about \$48) a week without forfeiting any of their pension benefits. The previous limit was 13£. In 1976, the ceiling will be raised again to 35£ and in 1977 to 50£. Thereafter, it is expected that the retirement test may be abolished entirely. This decision was taken by the House of Commons over the opposition of the Government. (*Age Concern Information Circular*, March, 1975)

- Liverpool's Social Services Dept. is introducing four weeks of free after-care service to elderly discharged home from a hospital. The service will be staffed by 166 people and will include meals-on-wheels and home help aides. (*Age Concern Information Circular*, March, 1975)

- We have learned more about the British scheme of linking the return on national savings certificates with the general index of retail prices. This scheme is designed to protect the savings of pensioners from inflation. The certificates will be available at post offices and banks starting June 2, 1975 and will be sold in units of 10£; 500£ will be the maximum amount of savings permissible under this arrangement. If kept for the five years required for maturity, the pensioner will obtain not only an interest rate commensurate with the rate of inflation, but also a bonus equivalent to 4% of the purchase price. Moreover, the certificates are completely free of income and capital gains taxes. If the certificates are cashed in before their first anniversary, only the face value will be repayable. However, after the first year, the certificates will be revalued on a monthly basis from the date of purchase in line with the general index of retail prices. If a pensioner withdraws his certificate before maturity, he will then only forfeit the 4% bonus. In the improbable event of deflation or the rate of inflation falling below market interest rates, the certificates would not be competitive with other savings schemes. However, the saver will never get back less than the face value of the certificate.

### U.S.

- A new alarm system is being made available for handicapped or elderly persons, capable of automatically dialing any predetermined number and delivering a tape-recorded message. The telephone can be set so that the flick of a switch or even a tongue movement can set the phone in action and summon aid. Severely handicapped people unable to dial a conventional telephone can initiate the telephone warning system and continue calling until the message is received. In most communities, the system can be installed for about \$15; the monthly rental is only about \$3 more than a standard telephone. (*The Older Nebraskan's Voice*, Feb., 1975)

- The Philadelphia Geriatric Center has converted old row houses into modern low-cost apartments for the aged near its main facilities providing tenants with the reassur-

ance of living near a service agency, a telephone "hot line" for emergencies, light housekeeping services, frozen meals at moderate price, and availability of PGC's many recreational, social and religious services. This project allows elderly individuals with some infirmity, but not requiring full nursing-home care to maintain independent living. Researchers found that 6 months after moving into this housing, the well-being of tenants was markedly better than groups of elderly who did not move or who had moved elsewhere. (*Press Release*, Philadelphia Geriatric Center)

- One of the more unusual successes of American publishing was the appearance of a book called *Foxfire* which sold more than a million copies. It was unusual because its origin was a high school magazine which attempted to recapture some local history in a small American mountain community by interviewing old people who still knew how to build a log cabin, weave cloth, churn butter, etc. — all the tasks people once had to perform if they wished to survive or be self-sufficient. These interviews became the basis of *Foxfire*. Its success was so great that *Foxfire II* has also now appeared.

With the threat of world shortages in essential fuels and minerals and the damaging effects of pollution, there has been a resurgent interest in values of self-sufficiency and recycling. Some communities are turning towards their old to reap the rewards of their knowledge. The high school project is still going strong 9 years later to the mutual benefit of young and old alike. The young have been put in direct touch with their history and have learned how to communicate effectively with the elderly. Older persons have regained a sense of self-worth in being able to contribute to their community. Elsewhere, groups of elderly are also getting together on local history projects rather than resigning themselves to a life of bingo games. (*NRTA Journal*, March/April, 1975)

- Elderly volunteers at the University of Southern California's Andrus Gerontology Center are using the skills they developed before retirement to provide services to the center and the university. The group plans projects, has formed committees to report on topics such as loneliness, handicaps, and continuing education, all of which are important to the volunteers themselves and useful to the center's goals of research, education and community involvement. The volunteers also participate as research subjects in the center and other university areas, serve as members of the speaker's bureau and assist in counseling, educational opportunities and hospitality. According to the director of the volunteers, the members are reentering the work force in new roles and "are a complement to what others cannot do because of time and experience. The thing that excites me most about the program is that this is the only organization in a higher educational institution that attracts retired persons back to the university setting in new roles." (*AARP News Bulletin*, May, 1975)

- May is traditionally Older Americans Month in the U.S. and this year it was used to bring together older people in Bicentennial Forums to discuss the updating of the first White House Conference on Aging's Declaration of Rights

and Obligations of Older Persons. The recommendations will be presented by the Federal Council on the Aging to the President at the end of this year to be incorporated in a Presidential proclamation at the beginning of the U.S.' Bicentennial Year in 1976.

It is then hoped that the new statement of rights and obligations will be considered at forums of older persons to determine progress at all levels of government in their implementation and to recommend specific action programs for both the public and private sectors to accelerate the implementation of both rights and obligations. (*Aging*, April, 1975)

## **RESEARCH STUDIES WITH PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS**

(For more information, please write the author or consult the appropriate journal.)

**A New Perspective on Creating Stimulating Social Roles for Seniors: A Community Organizational Process**, David C. Pritchard, Donna J. Hunger, School of Social Work, San Diego State University. (This paper was presented at the annual meeting of the Gerontological Society, Portland, Ore., Oct. 28–Nov. 1, 1974).

Senior Enterprises, Inc., a multi-functional organization, organized, directed and staffed by seniors, was created in San Diego to provide meaningful roles to the retired and stimulate further personal growth through social interaction and task accomplishment. The major goals of Senior Enterprises are senior involvement, advocacy, outreach to the elderly in the community, training seniors in new social roles and direct services to seniors, such as transportation, telephone reassurance, etc.

The idea was originally conceived by religious and student leaders. Facilitators were at first widely used to arouse the interest and enthusiasm of elderly participants and to destroy negative stereotypes they held about their ability to accomplish much in the community. It was important at first "to sustain a high level of enthusiasm by suggesting objectives which were easily identified, practical and feasible." Considerable time was spent at the beginning on "seniors' self-perceptions of their own capacity to learn the roles necessary to build an organization." The students helped the elderly become aware of their own abilities.

Soon seniors assumed the leadership roles and began to involve more reticent elderly into new roles which they could comfortably fill, such as information and referral work. Home-bound seniors were linked up in the telephone reassurance program and called other elderly on a daily basis.

Professionals welcome the participation of Senior Enterprises in its planning and task groups, and seniors meet with them and government officials in a working capacity.

One of the most difficult and sensitive problems that developed was integrating individuals with very different personalities into various roles within the organization. It