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AND PROGRAMMES FOR THE ELDERLY IN THE ESCWA REGION
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**UN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION
FOR WESTERN ASIA**

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**BULLETIN ON AGEING
No. 3/1993**

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IN OBSERVANCE of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the International Plan of Action on Ageing,¹ the General Assembly, at its forty-seventh session, devoted two days of its plenary meetings in October to an international conference on ageing. During that conference, an important document was adopted, the Proclamation on Ageing, from which essential points are reproduced in the present issue of the Bulletin. Much of the first issue of 1993 will be devoted to bringing to readers of the Bulletin details of other important decisions or documents adopted by the General Assembly.

This issue contains information on a variety of activities at the regional and national levels, including a report from Australia on community attitudes to ageing, a discussion of the problems resulting from an era of population ageing in Asia, a different perspective of the same problem in China and the background to the opening of an old people's home in Uganda.

The reports of activities of non-governmental organizations featured in this issue of the Bulletin are a historical perspective on the third age university and an overview of work undertaken by the Retired and Senior Volunteer Programme (RSVP) International, a non-governmental organization active in the area of ageing.

United Nations activities

1999 adopted as the International Year of Older People

A notable signpost on the road leading to the implementation of the International Plan of Action on Ageing was erected during the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly in October 1992: the Proclamation on Ageing.²

Recognizing the need for a practical strategy on ageing for the next decade, the General Assembly urged the international community, in the Proclamation, to undertake a series of measures including the following:

(a) Promoting the implementation of the International Plan of Action on Ageing;

(b) Disseminating widely the United Nations Principles for Older Persons;³

(c) Supporting practical strategies for reaching the Global Targets on Ageing for the year 2001;⁴

(d) Supporting broad and practical partnerships within the United Nations programme on ageing, including those between Governments, specialized agencies and United Nations bodies, non-governmental organizations and the private sector;

(e) Strengthening the United Nations Trust Fund for Ageing as a means of supporting developing countries in adjusting to the ageing of their populations;

(f) Encouraging donor and recipient countries to include older persons in their development programmes;

(g) Highlighting ageing at major forthcoming events, including, in the near future, events in the areas of human rights, the family, population, the advancement of women, crime

¹Adopted by the World Assembly on Ageing, held at Vienna from 26 July to 6 August 1982, and subsequently endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 37/51.

²General Assembly resolution 47/5, annex.

³General Assembly resolution 46/91.

⁴See the report of the Secretary-General on global targets on ageing for the year 2001: a practical strategy (A/47/339), section III.

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prevention, youth and the proposed world summit for social development;

(h) Encouraging the press and the media to play a central role in the creation of awareness of population ageing and related issues, including the celebration of the International Day for the Elderly on 1 October;

(i) Providing the immense human and material resources now urgently needed for adjustments to humanity's coming of age, which can be understood as a demographic phenomenon, but also as a social, economic and cultural one of great promise.

In the Proclamation on Ageing, the General Assembly also urged the support of national initiatives on ageing in the context of national cultures and conditions, so that, *inter alia*, national policies and programmes for the elderly are considered as part of overall development strategies.

The General Assembly decided in the Proclamation to observe the year 1999 as the International Year of Older Persons in recognition of humanity's demographic coming of age and the promise it holds for maturing attitudes and capabilities in social, economic, cultural and spiritual undertakings, not least for global peace and development in the next century.

One of the women who, it is hoped, will benefit from the adoption of the United Nations Proclamation on Ageing

Photo:
Markéta Luskáčová



Regional and national activities

Asia faces era of population ageing

Asia has become a centre of population ageing and faces the necessity of dramatic social and economic changes in order to cope with the demographic transition, according to a report prepared for the Fourth Asian and Pacific Population Conference, held in Bali, Indonesia, from 19 to 27 August 1992.

In the next century the world population will experience ageing at a rate never before experienced in the history of humankind. In this sense, the twenty-first century could be called the "Era of Population Ageing".

According to United Nations projections, 426 million people will attain age 65 or above in the year 2000. By the year 2025, that figure is expected to escalate to 828 million. Most of those people will reside in developing

regions and 86 per cent of the developing world's elderly will live in Asia in the year 2000.

The report reveals that the rate of increase in the elderly population from 1980 to 2000 will stand at 32.5 per cent for the more developed regions, but that it will rise as high as 88.6 per cent in the less developed regions. Citing a shift from high to low fertility and mortality as the cause of the ageing boom, the study emphasizes the serious potential consequences of ignoring the trend.

As the nature of the dependent population shifts rapidly from young to old, a heavier economic burden is placed on the working-age population. Increased expenditures result in a lower rate of savings and investment, making a negative impact on development.

The study anticipates that social security systems and pension plans

will gain in importance both to provide for the elderly and create a strong financial base to support continued development efforts. It also recommends prolonged productivity and self-reliance of older people to compensate for the expected shortages in the young labour force, stressing the need to fully utilize the period of low dependency to strengthen economic security or face economic stagnation.

The smaller and older family structure emerging in Asia also demands attention by policy makers, according to the report. In addition to the natural ageing process, the migration of young people from rural to urban areas contributes to the changing family unit.

With greater numbers of elderly needing care from fewer young people, the study suggests adopting a preventive approach to primary health care and providing extension services for rural areas.

The report maintains, however, that ageing need not be a negative

experience. As already witnessed in Japan, longer lives can also mean healthier and more productive lives.

Soon the "old-old" in Japan, i.e. more persons in the 75 to 80 and above age-group, will out-number the "young-old" aged 65 to 75 years.

China, Hong Kong, the Republic of Korea and Singapore will be next in completing the demographic transition through rapid declines in fertility, followed closely by Thailand. Indonesia and Malaysia can expect a slightly later change, with the slowest population ageing in the Asian and Pacific region occurring in southern Asia.

The report describes the ageing transition as inevitable, universal and irreversible. Its conclusion, however, is that the achievement of slower population growth and the resulting ageing are basically favourable for economic and social development.

Source: Extracts from "Era of population ageing arrives in third world", *Population Headliners*, No. 209 (August 1992).

Australia: community attitudes towards ageing

The Office of Ageing, which is a policy office within the Queensland state government, commissioned a telephone survey of Queenslanders' attitudes towards ageing in June 1991. A sample of 851 was selected at random from local telephone directories throughout Queensland to re-

present age, sex and location population distributions; the results of the survey were published by the Office of Ageing in the resource paper *Community Attitudes to Ageing*, and the accompanying information sheet, *Facts About Ageing*, No. 1.

Although most people interviewed in the survey saw "old age" beginning at about 65 years, they tended to put a 30-year gap between themselves and old age until they themselves were in their mid-forties or older. "Old age" was not identified as a person's own age until they were in their seventies and in some cases later than that.

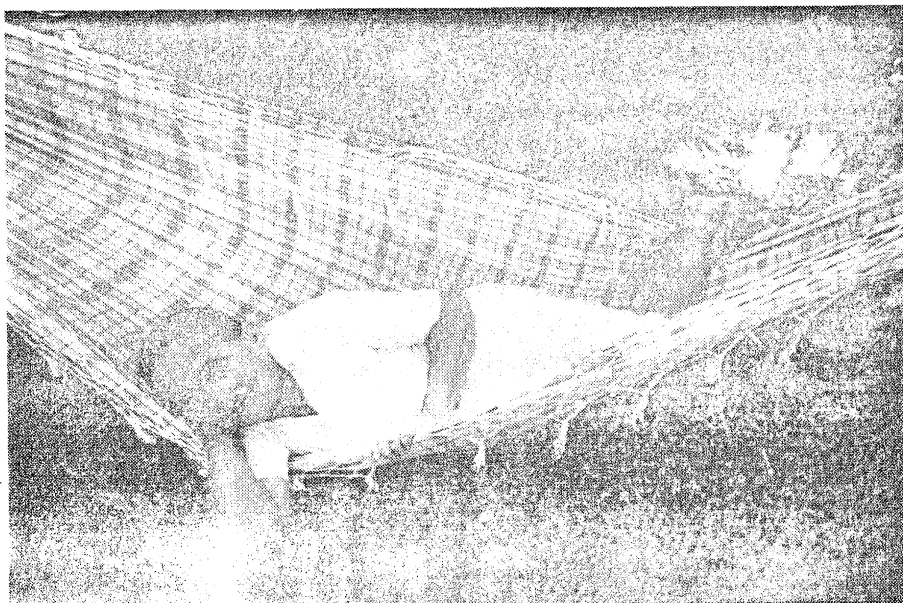
More people could name disadvantages of being in the older age group than advantages. One fifth of the people surveyed believed there were no advantages to being older, compared with 5 per cent who said there were no disadvantages. The

perceived advantages included freedom, wisdom, experience, time for activities, financial benefits, and the company of family and friends. The predominant perceived disadvantage, voiced by 75 per cent of the people surveyed, was the loss of the ability, mostly physical, to do things. Other disadvantages mentioned were lack of power and respect, loneliness and isolation.

Younger and older people perceived old age differently to some extent. In particular, financial and health problems were regarded more seriously by younger people. People most likely to say that old age brought no problems were aged over 70 years. Only about 50 per cent of the people surveyed described themselves as ageing; the proportion increased slightly after 35 years, and became much higher after the mid-fifties. Only about one third felt positive about their own ageing; one fifth felt concern. People most likely to be concerned, and less confident, about managing their own ageing were between 25 and 44 years of age. Those with positive attitudes to old age in general, and higher levels of contact with older people, were most likely to feel positive about their own ageing. Women were more likely to have a positive attitude towards older age in general. However, on a personal level they were more likely to be concerned about their own ageing, and less likely to describe themselves as ageing. Around one third of people below 60 years had not made any plans for life after 70. Those who had made plans were most likely to be in the mid-forties. Superannuation was the plan most frequently made, particularly by people aged between 25 and 34 years. In general, people who had made plans had a more positive



An Asian woman with her grandchild in a continent facing an era of population ageing



Communities may adopt negative attitudes towards ageing, but this Brazilian woman's attitude reveals that "you are as young as you feel"

attitude to older age in general and to their own ageing.

Four terms were seen as the most acceptable descriptions of the older age group: "mature aged", "older people", "seniors", "senior citizens". "Older people" was the only term equally acceptable to all age groups. Least liked terms were "aged people", "the aged", and "the ageing". Most people believed that age discrimination based on a judgement of "too old" does occur, and that it began between the ages of 40 and 70. Only a minority, however, believed they had experienced age discrimination, mostly in employment.

Source: Community Attitudes to Ageing: Resource Paper No. 1, and Facts About Ageing, No. 1, Office of Ageing, Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs, Queensland, Australia, November 1991.

China: tide of grey

China is well known as a country where the elderly are held in deep respect. Today, however, the vast numbers of people approaching or already past retirement age are presenting the country with a major challenge. Of the present population of 1.1 billion, some 91 million or 8.5 per cent are now in their sixties or older. It is estimated that by the end of the century, this number will have reached 130 million, accounting for 10 per cent of the population. Then, according to demographic criteria, China will fall into the category of an aged society.

The principal reason for this is the vast improvement in living standards and medical care realized since 1949. This has pushed average life expectancy up from 36 to 69. Watching the crowds on city streets, makes evident a gradual change in hair colour, referred to by the Chinese as the "tide of grey".

A problem of multiplication

From one point of view, the rapid increase in the number of the elderly is gratifying; it shows the progress Chinese society has achieved. But it also presents a number of difficulties that must be faced. This is an inevitable outcome of the change in population, and all countries of the world will face this challenge sooner or later. While calling upon all of society to consider this matter in a rational way,

the Chinese Government is preparing the country materially, ideologically and technologically and planning a series of appropriate measures.

It is a problem of multiplication. For example, medical care for the elderly costs three times as much as it does for the young and middle-aged, and their pensions and social welfare needs also must be met. At the same time, because retirees will increase at a higher rate than those entering the labour force, the number of working people in China will decline at an average rate of 1 million a year between 2020 and 2050. Consequently, whereas today there are eight working people for every retired person, by 2020 this ratio will have dropped to three to one.

The pinch has already begun to be felt in some places. As early as the late 1970s, Shanghai's retired population equalled a full 27 per cent of the city's work force. A textile plant at Tianjin must support a group of retired workers that equals 43.5 per cent of its current work force.

The changing profile of the population is due, in large measure, to China's one-child family policy. At Beijing, Shanghai and Tianjin, for example, surveys have found that nuclear families account for 66.4 per cent of all families. But this evidence of population control creates the problem of who will care for the elderly now that they no longer reside in traditional extended families. Clearly, one of the major issues facing China is how these senior citizens will be regarded in a rapidly changing society.

Organizing for the future

The question of how best to care for the elderly calls for a great deal of consideration, as it affects almost every family in China and will greatly influence the country's long-term social development.

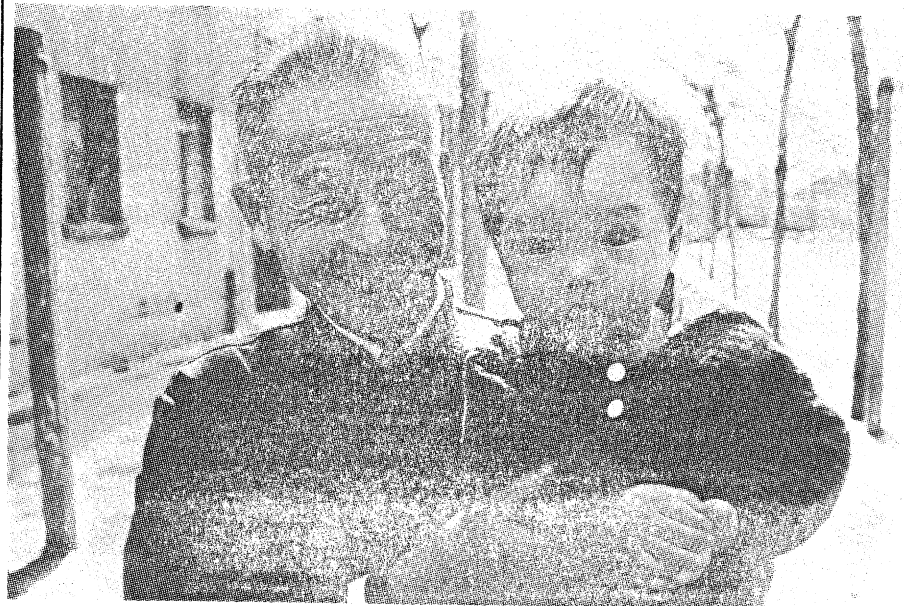
The establishment of the Chinese National Committee on Ageing in 1983 was an important step. The Committee's principal responsibilities include research, planning, suggestions for reform, supervision and inspection; it has now set up a series of local branches across the country that work alongside other organizations providing aid to or made up of the elderly.

The Government's major goal in this matter is ensuring that the elderly are provided with the conditions to live happily and healthily. At present, the country has 36,000 town- and village-run old people's homes with 430,000 residents, nearly four times as many as 10 years ago.

Physically and mentally healthy senior citizens will easily adapt themselves to changing circumstances; their dependency on the economic and medical support of society and relatives will be lightened.

In poorer parts of the country, old people are usually supported by their children, with some financial contributions from the local government.

Over the last few years, a great deal of effort has been devoted to constructing welfare facilities for the elderly. Care, recreation and rehabilitation centres, residential flats, consultancy offices, and even introduction bureaux to help the single or



A member of China's "grey tide" with his grandson

Photo: Saily and Richard Greenhill

widowed find partners, are some of the services provided for China's seniors. For instance, in Beijing's Jianguomen neighbourhood, there are 1,612 people over 60, accounting for 13.13 per cent of the district's population of 80,000. Since 1984, the office has built up a welfare network for the elderly including 28 health and rehabilitation centres, 44 recreation centres, a senior citizens' school, a ball team and a Beijing Opera troupe. Clearly, these activities have brightened the lives of the elderly immensely. At Jiangsu and Shanghai, many hospitals now have outpatient services and hospital beds reserved solely for the elderly, many of whom not only receive free registration, treatment and check-ups, but have medicine delivered to their homes as well. Both Shanghai and Tianjin now have geriatric hospitals.

China has 900 colleges and universities for the elderly, attended by nearly 200,000 people. These establishments play an important role in offering opportunities for further learning and promoting longevity through continued mental activity.

At present, China needs to utilize the valuable resource of its experience to the benefit of both society as a whole and the elderly themselves. Efforts should be concentrated on further research into the question of the role of seniors. This calls for multidisciplinary work in demography, sociology, medicine, economics and psychology.

Source: Extracts from: "China's Grey Tide", *Pictorial China*, No. 132 (Beijing, New Star Press, August 1991).

Uganda: old people's home opened

For centuries, the extended family has been an essential part of the African tradition. Elderly people lived within the family, where their experience, advice and practical help were appreciated and revered. But times are changing, in Africa as in other parts of the globe.

As a result of these often dramatic changes, an old-age awareness campaign was started in Uganda several years ago, in part to safeguard the extended-family system, but also to improve the social welfare of the aged and to protect their legal rights. The campaign is particularly relevant at a time when hundreds of thousands of

people have been killed during recent civil wars, and thousands more are now dying of the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). Many old people have lost all their relatives and have nobody to care for them.

One way in which this problem can be tackled was illustrated by the opening of an old people's home at Nakanyonyi in Mukono District on 11 October 1992. The Home will provide accommodation for 40 elderly persons from the Mukono Diocese of the Church of Uganda. The residents will keep animals and set up a dairy farm and a number of small workshops to provide both self-respect by taking responsibility and self-sufficiency by creating income for themselves and for the home.

The project is the result of financial support from the local community, the Good News Mission Society (a German protestant non-governmental organization) and the German

Government, which provided considerable funds for the project through the United Nations Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, via the United Nations Trust Fund for Ageing.

The home was officially opened by the German Ambassador to Uganda, and the ceremony was attended by the Uganda Minister of Finance and Economic Planning, the Minister of Public Service and the bishop of Mukono Diocese.

The success of this project is important, not only because it combines both humanitarian issues (in the provision of care for the elderly) and development issues (in the setting up of a small-scale enterprise run by the elderly themselves), but also because it can be viewed as an encouraging example of the way in which such issues can be approached and resolved in other parts of Africa and the developing world.

Activities of non-governmental organizations

The third age university

A contribution to the *Bulletin* from the Université du Québec à Hull describes the history and objectives of the third age university. As it is hoped that more information on these institutions might be published in the

future, further contributions from readers would be welcome.

Definition

The third age university sets out to teach how to live one's ageing in as full a manner as possible. It offers all



The elderly can teach as well as learn, as shown in this photograph from the Philippines

Photo: A. So

its services to a new category of students—seniors—so that they may play a useful social and collective role while at the same time broadening their horizons. It offers continuous education programmes, undertakes research in the field of gerontology and fosters preventive health and social initiatives.

History of the third age universities

The idea of establishing such universities was first developed at Toulouse in February 1973 by the Conseil de l'unité d'enseignement et de recherche "Etudes internationales et développement" of the Université des sciences sociales, on the initiative of Pierre Velles. Dr. Velles' concept was highly successful from the very beginning, evidence that a real need for this kind of institution existed. In 1975 alone, almost 20 "third age" universities were established, thanks to the many forums and conferences organized by the founder.

Objective

The third age university sees its main objective in bringing about an improved standard of living for seniors by teaching them how to keep healthy, giving them better access to their common cultural heritage, and involving them in activities that are beneficial to their communities.

It tries to achieve these ends by the following educational arrangements:

- Studies on ways to improve the quality of life of seniors;
- Multi-disciplinary research in such areas as legislation, economy, social action and public health;
- Seminars and training courses;
- Education programmes;
- Sociocultural activities.

Further objectives include supporting public and private services and organizations by joint training, information, recreation and applied research initiatives.

Activity programme

The activity programme is ambitious. Included are medical and physical activities such as health examinations, prevention of gerontological diseases, diet, physical activity, sports, yoga and oxygenation walks, and sociocultural activities of a wide variety, such as group discussions,

round-table meetings, discussion of films and slide shows on a range of different topics, reading groups and other discussion groups. Guided tours of companies, research centres, museums, archeological sites etc. also form an integral part of the programme. High priority is given to activities that support the community.

There are also programmes specially designed for more active members in which pre-retirees may also take part, such as the following:

- Retirement-preparation cycles (for pre-retirees and trainers);
- Periodic retirement-preparation seminars;
- Psychological preparation for retirement and the art of living in retirement;
- Field-days on various seniors' issues: loneliness, financial resources, housing, family and community ties, sanitary equipment, etc.;
- Continuous education cycles for doctors, health-care workers, social workers, administrators, etc.

Research in medicine, pharmacology, social services, public administration, economy, sociology, psychology, etc. is carried out on the following topics of special interest to seniors:

- Drugs cycle for seniors;
- Thermal-spring therapy for seniors;
- Nutritional cycle for seniors;
- Prosthesis for seniors;
- The European domestic-help system;
- Over-medication of seniors and other geriatric issues;
- Savings and resources of seniors;
- Preventive medicine for seniors: particularly mental hygiene and cardiovascular and pulmonary diseases;
- Definition of the main goals of a public-health policy for seniors.

Other areas covered include physical education, assessment of costs and advantages of preventive medicine and comparative studies of old-age retirement plans and of the judicial status of seniors in Europe and North America.

In several respects the third age university functions as a public-health

institution. Its primary role, however, is to serve as a further education institution for seniors, a training institution offering students knowledge of the third age and a research institution in the field of clinical, social and experimental gerontology. Some third age universities open their doors to the whole population as summer schools, while others hold winter schools.

International Association of the Third Age Universities

Since 1976, the various activities of the third age universities have been coordinated and developed by the General Secretary of the International Association of the Third Age Universities at Toulouse and by the Associate Secretary at Nantes. Today, there are more than 300 third age universities in Europe and North America. Of the five located in Québec, three (at Sherbrooke, Hull and Laval) are full members and two (at Montreal and Bois-Francs) are associate members.

Future prospects

Third age universities must participate to a greater degree in the area of continuing education, a new challenge facing traditional education. They should gradually become inter-age universities and their role will have to be adapted to particular locations and social circumstances. Syllabuses will have to be expanded to incorporate courses in professional retraining, as well as in specialized training and research in gerontology.

More information may be obtained from: International Association of Third Age Universities, Third Age University, Place Anatole-France, 31070 Toulouse Cedex, France; or from the Université du Québec à Hull, Bureau des Services à la collectivité; Case postale 1250, succ. "B, Hull, Québec, Canada J8X 3X7.

RSVP International

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) International is a non-governmental organization active in the area of ageing. Established more than 25 years ago with its headquarters in New York, RSVP International seeks to meet needs throughout the world with volunteers of around 60 years of age, their age varying from country to country. During the last seven years, RSVP

International has become responsible for programmes in 29 countries.

RSVP International accomplishes its work by offering technical assistance, mostly in the form of informational materials which have been translated into Chinese, French, Japanese, Spanish and other languages. RSVP International does not provide funding, but it helps groups to develop their own funding sources.

The RSVP International volunteers around the world perform services as diverse as the needs of their communities. Not only do the international volunteers perform the usual services, they also innovate, tailoring their work to the needs of the particular country, always keeping in mind that their services are designed to augment that of paid staff, never to replace it.

The energy and talents of the RSVP International volunteers are used in areas such as homeless shelters, hospitals, soup-kitchens, day-care centres and programmes for the mentally disturbed and physically disabled. The RSVP International volunteers also serve their peers by delivering meals to the homebound, or spending time with nursing-home residents. Other activities include working with former drug addicts, designing and selling toys for homeless children, and helping young mothers who are inmates at correctional facilities.

To community organizations, RSVP International offers clerical help of all kinds, including telephone services, bookkeeping and accounting assistance. Intergenerational programmes are promoted by RSVP International. Environmental and conservation projects such as tree planting are popular in Mexico and Australia. In developing countries, the needs vary and special projects are drawn up in accordance with those needs.

The development of RSVP International is especially encouraging because until recently older people in many countries were not recognized as having special assets to contribute to society. In addition to dispelling loneliness, being made to feel worthy causes tremendous beneficial changes in the feelings of volunteers and those they seek to serve.

Several years ago, the RSVP International group at El Paso, Texas, crossed the Rio Grande and helped establish a group that is flourishing today at Juarez, Mexico. From that experience has come the "sister city"

approach, whereby the RSVP International groups in various countries are extending their knowledge and benefits to cities in other countries. This approach is still relatively new, but it is sure to have far-reaching effects.

One goal of RSVP International is that an additional five countries

should join the organization by the end of 1993.

For further information, please contact: Eleanore Schweppe, Director of RSVP International, 200 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016 (Telephone: (212) 686-7788; telefax: (212) 686-9785).

Publications

Keeping Fit in Old Age

Growing older should not just be a matter of adding years to life, it should also be a matter of adding life to years. The World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe is trying to achieve that by promoting health policies and lifestyles that will lead to healthier populations. Each person should have the chance to enjoy his or her later years with minimal disability and to maintain or develop the ability to function, even if suffering from chronic or disabling conditions. For this purpose the Regional Office has published a series of booklets.

The first in this series, *Keeping Fit in Old Age*, is aimed at elderly persons themselves, but health professionals working with the elderly will also find it useful. Issues of immediate relevance to many older persons are dealt with in simple and clear language. Topics include how to deal with shortness of breath, vertigo, loss of hearing and how to prevent accidents in the home. With its friendly tone and uncomplicated style, it makes highly enjoyable and informative reading.

Other titles in the series are: *Coping with a Stroke* (No. 2); *Living with Diabetes* (No. 3); *Preventing Falls* (No. 4); *Living with Chronic Arthritis* (No. 5); and *Coping with Cardio-*

vascular and Pulmonary Disorders (No. 6).

Available from: Dr. Hana Hermanova, Regional Officer for Elderly, Disability and Rehabilitation, World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe, 8 Scherfigsvej, D-2100 Copenhagen, Denmark (Telephone: (31) 29 01 11; telefax: (31) 18 11 20; telex: 15 348 who dk).

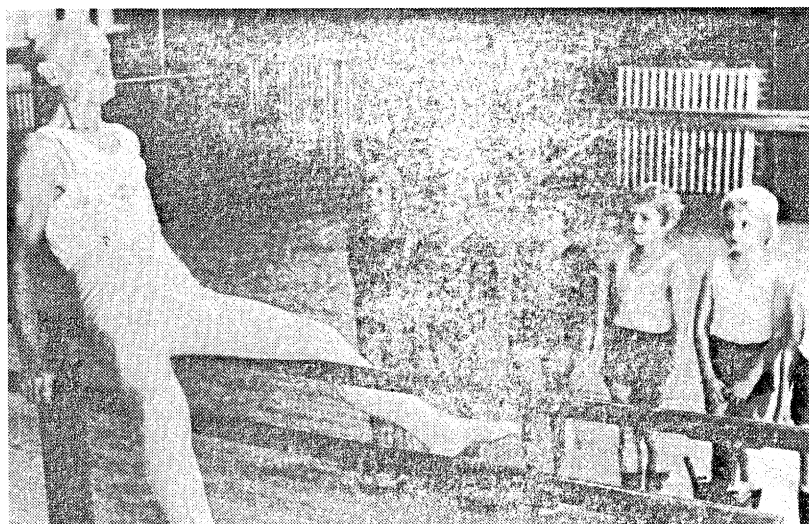
Caring for Older People: A Careers Guide

This comprehensive careers guide for persons interested in working in the field of caring was published jointly by Age Concern England, Help the Aged and the Centre for Policy on Ageing to coincide with the first International Day for the Elderly. It directs aspiring professionals towards the training they will need and the opportunities open to them. It includes national vocational qualifications, social work, nursing, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech therapy and chiropody, and offers suggestions for further study. The booklet is free of charge and will be available shortly from any of the joint publishers:

- Age Concern England, Astral House, 1268 London Road, London SW16 4ER (Telephone: 081 679 8000);

*Not just
keeping fit for
his own sake,
this man is
inspiring
youngsters to
follow his
example*

Photo: W. Thieme



- Help the Aged, 16/18 St. James's Walk, London EC1R OBE (Telephone: 071 253 0253);
- Centre for Policy on Ageing, 25/31 Ironmonger Row, London EC1V 3QP (Telephone: 071 253 1787).

Old Age: A Register of Social Research 1985-90

The Centre for Policy on Ageing has published this register of research, edited by Gillian Crosby, comprising projects as diverse as assessment regimes, chair design, energy efficiency, home care, medical students' attitudes to older people and urban/rural differences.

Under each entry the following information is provided: (a) address, contact and telephone number; (b) abstract; (c) keywords; (d) aims; (e) methodology; (f) research methods; (g) funding duration; (h) staffing; (i) public availability; and (j) publications.

Easy-to-use features include a comprehensive contents list; a list of abbreviations and acronyms; and indexes by subject, author, institution and funding body.

Available from: Centre for Policy on Ageing, 25-31 Ironmonger Row, London EC1V 3QP (Telephone: 01-253 1787).

Suicide in Older Adults: Selected Readings

The Suicide Information and Education Centre (SIEC) at Calgary, a resource centre on suicidal behaviour operated by the Canadian Mental Health Association, Alberta Division, has published this 89-page booklet comprising some of the most significant articles published on suicide in older persons over the past 10 years.

Suicide in older persons is a seldom acknowledged social problem. It is none the less a problem that has been steadily on the increase during the past 20 years. In Canada, persons over 65 years of age have a consistently higher rate of suicide than any other age group. Although this age group makes up less than 10 per cent of the population, it commits between 16 and 25 per cent of all suicides. With the elderly population increasing rapidly, suicide in older persons is expected to become a serious problem in the future.

Available from: Suicide Information and Education Centre, 201, 1615 — 10th Avenue S.W., Calgary, Alberta, Canada T3C OJ7 (Telephone: (403) 245-3900).

Rethinking Worklife Options for Older Persons

This publication, edited by J. Habib and C. Nusberg and published by the JDC-Brookdale Institute of Gerontology and Adult Human Development in Israel at Jerusalem, is based on papers presented at the fourteenth International Congress of Gerontology in Mexico in 1989. Contributions are from 12 countries. Section I deals with the phenomenon of early retirement in industrialized countries, with particular emphasis on the impact of public policies. Section II takes a regional perspective in examining the issue of older workers in Asia and the Pacific, highlighting the diverse cultural norms and approaches that affect the way in which work life is organized. Section III tries to analyse existing developments in work opportunities for older persons in the light of technological change and societal efforts to adapt to it. Section IV examines work options for older persons in the context of the desirability of reconsidering the organization of work, leisure and education over the entire life cycle.

Available from: International Federation on Ageing, 601 E Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20049, United States of America.

The Ageing Process: Training Pack

Authored by Ursula Craig and published at Bangkok by the HelpAge International, this training pack on ageing is an audio-visual package that looks at the ageing process in all its aspects: physical, mental and spiritual. The pack consists of a videotape, a trainer's manual and a trainee's handbook.

The Ageing Process, filmed at a residential home for elderly people run by the Department of Public Welfare of Thailand, not only visually presents the ageing process, but also instructs the viewer on recognizing both normal and abnormal signs of ageing and how best to care for elderly people. It runs for 20 minutes. Frequent verbal recapitulation throughout the video makes it an extremely useful training tool.

The trainer's manual, on which the video is based, describes in detail the ageing process and the changes associated with it. It is a learning tool, based on role play, learning exercises, evaluation tests, lecture notes and humorous illustrations. It includes use of overhead projection.

The trainee's handbook consists of summarized notes for use by participants on a training course and is intended as an *aide-memoire* to support learning sessions.

The pack comes in a portable case, and is available in both English and Thai. The current price is 20 pounds sterling, plus postage (£5 for Asia and £8 for the rest of the world).

Available from: HelpAge International, 302/157 Taveemitr Soi 8, Rama 9 Road, Bangkok 10310, Thailand (Telephone: (66-2) 247-7488; telefax: (66-2) 247-7488).

The Abuse of Elderly People: A Handbook for Professionals

The problem of abuse of the elderly is gradually receiving more recognition throughout the world. *The Abuse of Elderly People*, written by Jacki Pritchard and published in London in 1992 by Jessica Kingsley Publishers Ltd., is a resource manual aimed at a variety of professionals who work with cases of elderly abuse. It will also prove useful as a course text for student nurses and social workers.

The book aims at defining elderly abuse, raising awareness of the problem, developing skills in recognizing it, and developing ways of working with abuse of the elderly.

Approaches to the problem are discussed in both theoretical and practical terms. The underlying factors behind abuse are examined as well as the different types of abuse, situations and ways of recognizing abuse. The handbook provides a range of case studies set in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, dealing with each of these areas. Based on extensive research and practical experience, the book is designed to be used by both professionals and students to enable them to develop the awareness and skills necessary to deal with the wide variety of issues involved.

Available from: Jessica Kingsley Publishers Ltd., 116 Pentonville Road, London N1 9JB, United Kingdom. (Telephone: 071-833-2307; telefax: 071-837 2917).

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