

In setting minimum hourly wage standards, State and Federal laws have sometimes been responsible for loss of jobs by older workers who require longer time to do an adequate job and could not justify the higher hourly pay. When higher hourly wages were made mandatory, some smaller employers were forced to cut down the numbers employed who, in many cases, were older persons. It is clear that there are many challenges to action on the part of the employers, employees, unions, Federal, State, and local government, private employment agencies, churches, schools and families in attempting to meet the difficulties in finding such solutions.

The Federal Government can serve best by providing statistics and analyses, by encouraging research, by prodding and encouraging industry and labor unions to cooperate in planning appropriate action to provide employment for older workers. To encourage older workers to look to the Federal Government for care and support adding the burden of additional costs for broad government assistance to the shoulders of the working public, in my judgment, would weaken the whole fiber of the economic system. To force an aged individual who is capable and wants to work on the public and private pension roles and then seek to find working substitutes to fill the void seems a very poor approach.

Action is needed on the part of employers and employer organizations such as Chambers of Commerce, Manufacturer's Associations, Industry Associations, Labor Unions, etc. - especially in the promotional and educational area. Union employment contracts should be examined and hiring practices reviewed to insure against barriers to hiring middle-age and older persons.

I am surprised that there is no concentrated effort to modify the present social security regulation in order to encourage greater employment after retirement age. I would hope that in developing some definite proposals you would give serious consideration to endorsing the general principle stated by Dwight S. Sargent, Chairman of the Employment and Retirement Section of the National Committee on Aging, "that individuals who are able to work beyond age 65 and who want to work and for whom there is a job, be permitted to work, and that self-support in terms of capacity and desire is good for the individual and good for the economy".

-----