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REMARKS OF THE HONORABLE JOHN E. FOGARTY, U. S. REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECOND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF RHODE ISLAND AT THE OCCASION OF THE ANNUAL DINNER OF THE TWENTY-FIVE YEAR SERVICE CLUB OF THE U. S. RUBBER COMPANY'S PROVIDENCE PLANT, AT THE SHERATON BILTMORE IN PROVIDENCE ON THURSDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 27, 1960

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is a real privilege for me to be here with you on this most significant occasion, and I am most grateful to Mr. Strickhouser for his invitation to attend this annual dinner of the 25-year Service Club of the U. S. Rubber Company's Providence Plant.

Numbered among you are many "key" people in various departments of this large plant. Your years of experience and your leadership are, I am sure, invaluable. Your presence provides the company with a constant resource of reliable wisdom and practical "know-how" which can be counted upon to solve many knotty problems.

I am advised that there are 500 members of the 25-year Service Club. At the very minimum, then, the membership of this club represents a total of twenty-five hundred years of experience -- 25 centuries of accumulated "know-how". I'm sure the company cherishes this veritable gold-mine of experience.

Experience and know-how are important in every field of endeavor. I have been representing the people of Rhode Island in Washington for 20 years, and, although that is not quite long enough to qualify for a 25-year service club, I do feel that I have gained considerable experience of great value while serving you in the Congress of the United States.

However, I have always considered my experience as "an arch to build upon", and I am still building.

I hope to continue gaining experience in the House of Representatives and can assure you that any such gain on my part will produce benefits for the people of Rhode Island, in particular, and for all of our people. I have, of course, many areas of interest. I want to see improved education for our children and I have a particular interest in such things as the protection of our Rhode Island industries from cheap foreign and domestic competition.

Through the years, however, I have become especially associated with the health needs of this nation and with the accomplishments and gains which have been made in the battle to meet those needs. I am proud to have been able to play an influential role in the development in this country of a greatly expanded medical research effort which is daily con-

tributing significantly to the health and welfare of our people.

From my vantage point as chairman of the House subcommittee on appropriations dealing with health and welfare activities of the Federal government, I have been instrumental in seeing to it that health and medical research received strong support, and I have been highly gratified by the wonderful results which are being obtained. Our national investment in medical research is paying off with dividends in health and in lengthened useful lives.

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The progress of medical science in practically eliminating many of the infectious diseases as serious threats to life, and the development of drugs, techniques and devices which make it possible to control, modify, or abort many others has resulted in a startling increase

in longevity for the average person. Thus, today, we have a growing public health problem associated with our aging population.

In 1900 only four percent of the U. S. population was 65 years of age or over. Today that percentage has increased to 15 percent.

Now, bringing the figures home to us here in Rhode Island we can apply those percentages to our state's population.....In 1900 Rhode Island's population was 428,556. The 1960 census revealed that the state now contains 841,852 people. Thus we find that in 1900 there were approximately 17,000 people who were 65 or older, while today there are more than 126,000.

Rhode Island's total population has not quite doubled during the past 60 years, but the

number of persons in the state who are over 65 has increased almost seven and a half times during the period....

Still another way of putting it which is even more impressive is this: the increase in Rhode Island's population between 1900 and 1960 was 413,296, The increase in persons over 65 years of age during this same period was 109,136. Thus we find that of the net increase in total population more than one-fourth, or 26 percent, consists of persons over 65.

With the virtual elimination of many of the communicable diseases as a threat to the life and health of the younger segments of the population the accent has been increasingly placed, especially during the past ten years, upon the development of health and medical research programs directed toward the chronic diseases, those which affect, particularly, the older segments of the population.

However, even though I've had quite a bit to do with the passage of a considerable amount of legislation which has helped to improve the health and welfare of the people in recent years, it seemed to me that in the face of the rapidly developing and complex problems associated with aging, we were not doing enough to attack this problem specifically.

Because I believed most sincerely that we needed to take this problem in hand and do something about it, I introduced a bill calling for a White House Conference on Aging. The Act was passed by Congress and signed into law in September, 1958. It provided for the convening of the Conference in January, 1961, in Washington, D. C.

I am proud to have played a leading role in the development of the idea for this Conference and in the passage of the Act making it possible.

I think it can be a most significant meeting which should be able to contribute mightily toward the development of a comprehensive national program which will be a major contribution toward solution of many of the problems which now confuse us.

Bearing in mind that the policy of the Congress is that the Federal government will work jointly with the states and their citizens to promote a better life for our senior citizens, I would emphasize the fact that there is no intention to infringe in any way upon the right of all persons involved to exercise free choice and self-help in planning their own futures.

As stated in the Act, here is the declaration of purpose for the White House Conference on Aging:

- (1) Assuring middle-aged and older persons

equal opportunity with others to engage in gainful employment which they are capable of performing, thereby gaining for our economy the benefits of their skills, experience, and productive capacities, and;

(2) Enabling retired persons to enjoy incomes sufficient for health and for participation in family and community life as self-respecting citizens, and;

(3) Providing housing suited to the needs of older persons and at prices they can afford to pay; and,

(4) Assisting middle-age and older persons to make the preparation, develop skills and interests, and find social contacts which will make the gift of added years of life a period of reward and satisfaction and avoid the unnecessary social costs of premature deterioration and disability, and;

(5) Stepping up research designed to relieve old age of its burdens of sickness, mental breakdown and social ostracism.

The call to action in behalf of the aging population of this country represented by the White House Conference on Aging is already stirring up action of the type we need. The enactment of my bill has stimulated people all over the country to thinking and to action.

Every State, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and the District of Columbia will be participating actively in the Conference. All the states and territories have held their own conferences and from them have come reports and recommendations to the national office. These reports and recommendations are being collated and will be used as a basis

for discussion at the White House Conference in Washington.

There will be 2,800 official Conference delegates, 1,747 of whom are from the states and territories and 660 of whom are from national voluntary organizations.

The mounting public interest in the subject of aging and in the Conference is reflected in the hundreds of community forums on aging which have been held in all the states. It is reflected in the hundreds of state, regional and local surveys made, and in the dozens of newsletters on aging now being published throughout the country. It is reflected in the actions of many national organizations-- religious, civic, fraternal, union, business and professional-- to inform the public, through their millions of members, of the problems of aging and of the

action being taken to solve them.

The White House Conference, itself, will meet in Washington next January for four days. In April, 1960, its final report must be submitted to the President. That report will delineate its findings and set forth its recommendations.

The White House Conference on Aging cannot put into effect or enforce any of its recommendations. Its function is simply to search out, identify and define all of the various problems facing the nation's older people and then to recommend courses of action that will meet these problems. The action must be taken by the communities, states and the Federal government, as well as by private organizations and by older people themselves.

The White House Conference is a citizens' attack on the problems of aging, a forum which will bring to

bear the best thinking and the resourcefulness of thousands of earnest, serious-minded, devoted people. It will be necessary for all of us to back the attack if this nation is to gain, in full measure, the benefits that can come from a truly coordinated assault on the forces of disease and adversity which so often afflict our older citizens.

Although I have emphasized to you this evening hopes and plans for accomplishment involved with the White House Conference on Aging, I certainly do not mean to minimize the very important medical research activities which have been and presently are under way in institutions throughout the country. Much valuable work has been done, but my belief is that there must be more.

The chief Federal programs in aging research, which I have worked to strengthen to meet our increasing

needs, are those conducted by and supported in other research institutions by, the National Institutes of Health.

Through its Center for Aging Research, established in 1956, the National Institutes of Health plans, coordinates and fosters aging research. This Center stimulated and assists gerontology projects in universities, medical centers and medical research institutions. The Center works closely with other groups and organizations interested in aging research and has been of invaluable aid in connection with the White House Conference on Aging.

Through its grants programs the National Institutes of Health supports a rapidly growing number of aging research projects (now some 600 in number) in research institutions throughout the country. Worth of particular note are four large projects being conducted at Duke

University, the Albert Einstein College of Medicine,
Western Reserve University and the University of
Miami. And I believe that such a center should be
established at the University of Rhode Island

There is no likelihood that there will ever
be developed any magic formula which will maintain
eternal youth, but we should be able to extend the
average man's happy, healthy, productive years,
relatively free of major, painful, disabling diseases,
however. And I think that is most worthwhile.

It has been a pleasure to be with you tonight.
I would like to leave you with a lighter treatment of
the subject of aging in a little poem written by the
American writer, Samuel Hoffstein, who died in 1947.

It runs as follows:

Babies haven't any hair;
Old men's heads are just as bare;
Between the cradle and the grave
Lies a haircut and a shave.

Thank you!