ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE AGED

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There are nearly 8 million persons in the United States who have reached or passed the critical age of 65. Particular interest attaches to them because of State and Federal legislation recently enacted to bring them a measure of economic security. During the years to come, most industrial and commercial workers will count on modest annuities under title II of the Social Security Act, and it is entirely probable that many other persons not now covered by the insurance features of the act will receive such protection. Taxation of employees and employers under title VIII of the Social Security Act and the use of Federal and State revenues for old-age assistance under title I have called forth discussion concerning the wisdom of social provision for old-age support.

Opinion in the press and elsewhere has been divided as to the need of the aged for special consideration and protective legislation. Many individualists still believe that provision for old age should be a matter of personal initiative and that, by and large, only the improvident find it necessary to seek public or private charity. There is also widespread belief that government should not impinge upon the traditions of family responsibility for the aged. Then, too, it is pointed out, increasing numbers of persons are enjoying the benefits of public and private pensions and annuities as Government systems expand and industry makes more generous provision for retired workers under group insurance.

In evaluating such statements and in arriving at a quantitative conception of the extent to which persons 65 and over are dependent upon others for support, it would be highly desirable if we could ascertain the economic status of each person in this age group. Clearly, no direct method of determining the means of support of the aged is possible. A house-to-house canvass, even if practicable, would fail to yield the desired information, for persons who were not applying for, or already receiving, public or private relief would be under no compulsion to reveal the sources and amount of their income. A few surveys of this type have been made in the past, but they are out of date and are open to criticism as being either biased or inadequate in scope, or not sufficiently penetrating.

In default of any direct method of obtaining an economic census of the aged, an indirect method is here presented, based on an analysis of statistical, social, and economic data (table 1). These data are believed to be reasonably accurate as of some date during the year ended April 15, 1937, usually as of December 31, 1936. When current statistics have been lacking, estimates have been made from the latest information available.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Persons 65 or over may be divided into two economic groups: *The independent*, or essentially self-sustaining, and *the dependent*, comprising (1) those supported wholly or partially by public or private social agencies, and (2) those who are essentially dependent on friends and relatives.

At the beginning of 1937 there were three large groups of the aged (each numbering about 1 million persons) who possessed or received some form of income: (1) persons with current earnings (item A-1 in table 1), (2) persons with savings (A-2), and (3) those in receipt of public assistance (old-age assistance and aid to the blind) under the Social Security Act (B-1a).

In addition, there were three smaller miscellaneous groups: one of about half a million (574,000) persons who received Federal, State, municipal, and private pensions, insurance annuities, and so forth (A, items 3-10); a second of about a quarter of a million (268,000) persons who received various forms of organized public or private relief, other than public assistance under the Social Security Act, in their own homes (B, items 1b-1d); and a third group of about 200,000 aged persons who were in public or private homes, in hospitals for mental disease, or in other institutions (B, items 1e-1h).

The number with earnings and savings is estimated; the number receiving public assistance is known from actual count; the miscellaneous groups are partly estimated and partly by count. The validity of conclusions here presented would

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Table 1.—*Means of support of persons 65 years of age and over in the United States, compiled and estimated, April 1937* [1]

Status of persons dependent on specified means of support	Number	Percentage distribution
Total estimated number of persons 65 and over in the United States, Jan. 1, 1937	[2] 7,816,000	100.0
A. Self-dependent [3]	**2,746,000**	**35.1**
By reason of:		
1. Current earnings	1,000,000	12.8
2. Savings, real estate, or securities	1,172,000	15.0
3. Federal pensions:		
a. Military service:		
(1) Veterans' Administration	46,000	0.6
(2) Federal employees receiving military retirement pay (Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard)	25,000	0.3
b. Civil service	33,000	0.5
c. Other Federal employees	(4)	(5)
4. State pensions:		
a. State employees	6,000	0.1
b. Teachers	18,000	0.2
5. Municipal pensions:		
a. Policemen and firemen	25,000	0.3
b. Teachers	7,000	0.1
c. Other municipal employees	10,000	0.1
6. Private industrial pensions	150,000	1.9
7. Trade-union pensions	10,000	0.1
8. Other private pensions	25,000	0.3
9. Insurance annuities	204,000	2.6
10. Other resources	15,000	0.2
B. Dependent	**5,070,000**	**64.9**
1. Supported wholly or partially by public or private social agencies	1,590,000	20.3
a. In receipt of public assistance under the Social Security Act (December 1936)	1,116,000	14.3
b. In receipt of emergency unemployment relief, of poor relief, or of old-age assistance not under the Social Security Act (noninstitutional care only)	200,000	2.6
c. In receipt of earnings or subsistence payments under the Works Program (December 1936)	58,000	0.8
d. In receipt of organized private charity	10,000	0.1
e. In public homes:		
(1) Local homes, almshouses, county homes, poor farms, infirmaries	50,000	0.6
(2) State and Federal veterans' homes and State homes for civilians	17,000	0.2
f. In hospitals for mental disease	72,000	0.9
g. In prisons and jails	2,000	(5)
h. In private homes for the aged (denominational, fraternal, nonsectarian, and other)	55,000	0.7
i. Other	10,000	0.1
2. Dependent on friends and relatives (wholly or almost wholly)	3,480,000	44.6

[1] Compiled from latest data available from sources indicated in section on Detailed Analysis, p. 7, *infra*. All figures rounded to thousands. Data, unless otherwise stated, are reasonably correct as of some date during the year ended Apr. 15, 1937. Data on pensioners adjusted, when possible, to refer only to persons 65 years of age or over. Persons under 65, retired because of disability, as well as widows under 65 and dependent minors, are generally excluded. Errors arising from lack of exact information as to age distribution are believed to be small and not biased in one direction.

[2] Estimated for continental United States, Alaska, and Hawaii on the advice of the U. S. Bureau of the Census by the Division of Public Assistance Research, Bureau of Research and Statistics, Social Security Board. Total for Alaska and Hawaii, 13,877; little specific information available about the aged in these Territories.

[3] Many persons in this group are partially dependent even though they have some income from earnings, property, savings, or investments.

[4] Fewer than 1,000.

[5] Less than 0.1 of 1 percent.

be seriously affected by any large error in the estimates of items A–1 and A–2, but, for reasons given below, these estimates are believed to be reasonably correct.

While the *number of persons of working age covered* by pension and annuity plans was fairly large, the *number of aged persons actually receiving benefits* was small, because of high mortality and labor turnover among industrial and other groups which heavily cut down the number of covered workers who had lived to retirement age and had been able to qualify for pensions under plans antedating the Social Security Act.

Out of a total of about 7.8 million persons 65 or over on January 1, 1937, in the continental United States and the Territories of Alaska and Hawaii, it is believed that:

Approximately one-third (2.7 million) were self-dependent by reason of their current earnings, savings (including income from property or other investments), pensions, or annuities. It is assumed that such persons were essentially self-sustaining and able at least to subsist on their income, but that possibly one-half of them (1.4 million) were partially dependent upon friends and relatives for a more comfortable living and received some aid in the form of food, clothing, shelter, spending money, medical care, or recreation.

Approximately one-fifth (1.6 million) were supported wholly or partially by public or private social agencies. Of this number, possibly three-fourths (1.2 million) received some assistance from friends and relatives.

Between two-fifths and one-half (3.5 million or 45 percent) appear to have been essentially dependent on friends and relatives.

Approximately two-thirds (5 million) were supported wholly or partially by public or private social agencies or were dependent on friends and relatives.

Over three-fourths (6 million or 77.5 percent) were in all likelihood wholly or partially dependent on children, other relatives, or friends. This estimate is the total of the following items in table 1: B 2 (3.5 million), plus one-half A (1.4 million), plus three-fourths B 1 (1.2 million).

Slightly more than half a million persons 65 or over (559,000) were enjoying the benefits of pensions or annuities which they had earned or had purchased directly from private insurance companies. Many retirants [1] under pension systems are under 65 and are excluded from this survey.

[1] A *retirant* is a person who has retired from public or private employment or service and who is in receipt of a public or private pension or annuity or both. (The word *retiral* refers to the *act* of retiring or of going into retirement, while *retirant* refers to the *person* who performs the act of retiring.) The term is comparable to *annuitant*, a person who has an annuity, but is more comprehensive since it includes both pensioners and annuitants who are bene-

Fewer than half a million (473,000) were receiving aid from public or private social agencies, other than that administered under the Social Security Act, titles I and X.

One-seventh of all persons 65 or over (1.1 million) were receiving old-age assistance under the Social Security Act in 40 States, the District of Columbia, and the Territory of Hawaii. To this number may be added about 9,000 persons in this age group who were receiving aid to the blind under the Social Security Act in 25 States and the District of Columbia.

DETAILED ANALYSIS OF MEANS OF SUPPORT OF PERSONS 65 AND OVER

The Self-Dependent

This group, comprising about one-third of all persons 65 or over, includes those who are essentially independent by reason of the receipt of income of one kind or another, exclusive of aid from social agencies or of substantial assistance from friends and relatives. Many persons who are independent at age 65 become in later years partially, and then wholly, dependent as earnings cease and savings are exhausted. The aged are self-dependent by reason of:

Current Earnings

The Committee on Economic Security estimated there were about 1 million persons 65 and over employed at the beginning of 1935.[2] In 1936 Henry E. Jackson of the Social Engineering Institute in New York City estimated there were 1,015,388 persons 65 and over employed in American industries.[3] These estimates seem reasonable since numerous factors have been operating to decrease the number of the aged in gainful occupations, which was reported as 2.2 million persons in the 1930 census. These factors are (*a*) permanent loss of employment during the depression by persons in their fifties and sixties, (*b*) failure of industry to reemploy older unemployed persons who, but for the depression, would have remained at their jobs, (*c*) increased competition for jobs by younger workers, (*d*) industry's demand for younger, stronger, more adaptable workers, especially in mechanized trades, (*e*) fixation in the public mind of 65 as the age at which voluntary or involuntary retirement should take place and after which persons are usually adjudged "unemployable," and (*f*) underwriting requirements of group insurance schemes which militate against older workers.

Savings, Real Estate, or Securities

The State Commission on Old Age Security in New York estimated that only 5 percent of persons 65 and over in that wealthy State in the prosperous year of 1929 were self-dependent on savings.[4] Taking the country as a whole, there is strong evidence that four-fifths of the entire adult population has on the average about $250 per capita accumulated wealth and, therefore, cannot be self-supporting, except for a short period, by reason of savings, interest, rents, dividends, receipts from insurance (exclusive of annuities), or proceeds from the sale of owned property. Estate data analyzed for the period from 1912 through 1923 indicated that four-fifths of all adults dying during those years had estates of an average value of approximately $250.[5] Presumably, therefore, more than four-fifths of all persons 65 and over have wealth of less than $250, for most of them have passed the period of accumulation and are drawing on past savings. This tapering off of savings as age advances leads us to assume that probably about 85 percent of the aged have total accumulated wealth or capital (savings, real estate, securities) in an average amount of about

ficiaries under retirement systems. Thus, a retirant under a State employee retirement system may receive an annuity purchased by his own contributions plus a pension of equal amount given to him by the State. The term *retirant* excludes persons who have never been gainfully occupied and who, therefore, cannot retire under a retirement system, but who may, nevertheless, purchase annuities from private insurance companies. The term *pensioner* is unsatisfactory because it has been laxly used to include not only persons rewarded by a grateful government for military or civil service, or by industry and labor for industrial service, but also persons in receipt of public assistance administered on the basis of need without regard to previous service records.

[2] U. S. Senate. *Economic Security Act.* Hearings on S. 1130, Committee on Finance, 74th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington, 1935), pp. 168, 1,114.

[3] Jackson, H. E., *Social Security by Common Law*, Social Engineering Institute (New York, 1936), p. 14.

[4] New York (State), Commission on Old Age Security, *Old Age Security* (Albany, Lyon, 1930.) Legislative Doc. (1930) No. 67, p. 39.

[5] U. S. Federal Trade Commission, *National Wealth and Income* (Washington, 1926), p. 58. The total number of persons dying in areas included in the study during the period covered was 259,908, of whom 184,958 were 21 years of age or over. Of these, only 43,512 had estates which were probated; the remaining 141,446, or 76.5 percent, had estates too small to probate. The average value of unprobated estates was assumed to be the same as in the lowest value group (under $500) of probated estates, namely, $258. Thus, of the estates studied, 147,545, or 79.8 percent, had an average value of $258.

$250, an amount entirely inadequate to provide an independent living during old age, and that only 15 percent have capital resources averaging more than $250. That the wealth of the aged is necessarily small is further indicated by the fact that nearly three-fifths of all persons reported to be 65 or over in the 1930 census were in the older age group of 70 or over. In this group employment is markedly curtailed and savings are small or nonexistent. Even possession of real estate, as home or investment, may not keep an otherwise penniless aged person from destitution.

Federal Pensions

Military service.—Two groups are included here: (1) aged beneficiaries in receipt of pensions paid by the United States Veterans' Administration, and (2) Federal military employees on retirement pay.

(1) *Veterans' Administration.*—The United States Veterans' Administration reports that on March 31, 1937, there were 594,831 veterans or dependents of deceased veterans receiving pensions, compensation or disability allowances, or emergency officers' retirement pay; of this number 45,728 [6] are estimated to be 65 or over and are the only ones included in this analysis.

(2) *Federal employees receiving military retirement pay.*—There were approximately 25,000 Federal military employees, mostly in the War and Navy Departments, who were receiving retirement pay although not under the civil-service retirement system. This total included retirants of the Coast Guard Service, which is in the Treasury Department but is considered part of the Federal military service since in time of war it comes under the jurisdiction of the Navy Department. On June 30, 1936, Federal military retirants, of whom some were under 65, included:

Officers, nurses, and others in the War Department	14, 530
Officers and enlisted men in the Navy Department	7, 775
Officers (418) and enlisted men (630) in the Marine Corps	1, 048
Coast Guard retirants: Commissioned officers and enlisted men (1,214); members of the former Life Saving Service on compensation list (160)	1, 374
Total	24, 727

[6] Private communication.

Civil service.—The United States Civil Service Commission reported 51,206 annuitants on the roll on June 30, 1936, distributed as follows: [7]

Retired for age	24, 603
Retired on account of disability	10, 877
Voluntary separation within 2 years of retirement age after 30 years of service	4, 610
Involuntary separation after 30 years of service	9, 118
Involuntary separation with less than 30 years of service	1, 998
Total	51, 206

Not quite two-thirds (33,106, or 65 percent) of these annuitants were 65 or over.[8]

Other Federal employees.—There were approximately 700 Federal employees not in the military service and not under civil service who were receiving retirement pay on June 30, 1936. These included 553 in the Lighthouse Service; 80 officers of the Foreign Service in the State Department; 47 commissioned officers of the Public Health Service; 24 judges in the Department of Justice; and 9 commissioned officers in the Coast and Geodetic Survey. (Unpublished data.)

State Pensions

State employees.—On April 15, 1937, only 11 States had retirement plans for all State employees not covered by special plans.[9] The number of beneficiaries in any one of the States is not large, and the total for all of them probably does not exceed 6,000 persons after deductions are made for retirants, and a few dependents, under 65. Dependents 65 and over are included. Latest data available from State reports and correspondence indicate the following distribution of beneficiaries under State-wide plans (table 2).

Teachers.—In addition to State-wide retirement plans for all State employees, there are also State plans for public school teachers. Current unpublished data from the National Education Association, Washington, D. C., show there are about 871,000 public school teachers in the United States, 64 percent of whom are covered by some sort of retirement system. In May 1937, there were 23 State-wide systems and 59 local systems in operation; 4 States have passed laws to be-

[7] U. S. Civil Service Commission, *Fifty-third Annual Report for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1936* (Washington, 1936), p. 78.

[8] U. S. Civil Service Commission, *Civil Service Retirement, Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1936, Form 3013*, March 1937, pp. 6, 7.

[9] *Retirement Systems for State Employees in Kansas* (Research Department, Kansas Legislative Council, 1937), Pub. No. 59, pp. 10, 20-24. For description of State and other retirement plans, see *Old-Age and Disability Pensions*, S. Doc. No. 140 (Washington, 1928).

Table 2.—*Number of beneficiaries aged 65 and over* [1] *under State employee retirement plans, exclusive of special plans for policemen, firemen, and teachers*

State	Date	Number of beneficiaries	Remarks
Total		5,771	
California [2]	June 30, 1936	[3] 313	Disability and service retirants including those under age 65; 4 beneficiaries of deceased retirants included.
Colorado [4]	June 30, 1937	[3] 50	40 service; 10 disability. No provision for dependents.
Connecticut [5]	1937	[3] 76	Retirants under 65 included.
Maine [6]	October 1937	[3] 37	All service retirants; no provision for dependents.
Massachusetts [6]	do	526	Total retirants 590 (including 64 under age 65); 548 service; 42 disability. (21 dependents not included with retirants.)
Minnesota [6]	October 1, 1937	265	Total retirants 293 (including 28 under age 65). Those 65 and over include: 258 superannuation, 7 disability. No provision for dependents.
New Jersey [6] [7]	June 30, 1937	144	Total beneficiaries 204 (including 60 under age 65). Those 65 and over include: 128 service; 11 disability; 5 dependents.
New York [8]	do	2,941	Total beneficiaries, including dependents, 3,892; 2,941 or 75.6 percent 65 or over.
Ohio [9]	1937		System adopted 1933. First pensions payable Jan. 1, 1938.
Pennsylvania [6]	September 1937	[3] 1,396	907 superannuation; 107 disability; 382 involuntary.
Rhode Island [9]	1937	23	System adopted 1936. 11 under 65 not included.

[1] Beneficiaries include retirants for both service and disability, and also, in some States, widows, orphans, and other dependents of deceased beneficiaries; unless otherwise stated, beneficiaries are 65 years of age and over.

[2] *Report of the Board of Administration, California State Employees' Retirement System, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1936*, p. 9 (mimeo).

[3] Age distribution not available.

[4] *State Employees' Retirement Association of Colorado, Secretary's Annual Report, July 1, 1936, to June 30, 1937* (Denver, Colo., 1937), p. 4; also data from correspondence.

[5] *Report of Commission Appointed to Study Pension Systems in the State of Connecticut*, 1936-37, Public Doc. No. 88, 36 pp. (Hartford, Conn., 1937), p. 34.

[6] Data from correspondence.

[7] *State Employees' Retirement System of New Jersey, Fifteenth Annual Report of the Board of Trustees*, June 30, 1937, p. 29.

[8] *Sixteenth Report of the Comptroller on the Operation of the [New York] State Employees' Retirement System*, Legis. Doc. (1937) No. 12, 58 pp., 1937, pp. 36-48.

[9] *Retirement System for State Employees in Kansas*, loc. cit., p. 10. Also unpublished information in correspondence dated Dec. 23, 1937.

come operative by or in 1939.[10] There are approximately 32,000 teachers receiving State pensions. The average allowance is about $700 per year. In some States there are no age requirements for service retirements, in others retirement is optional at 60, and again it may be as low as 50 for women and 58 for men. Disability retirements are permissible after from 5 to 20 years' service.[11] As a result of the liberality of these requirements, the average age for both superannuation and disability retirement of teachers is low. Recent data on age distribution are not available. If the distribution is similar to that shown among Federal employees and if allowance is made for (1) the much larger proportion of women among teachers than among Federal civil-service employees and (2) the higher disability rate for women resulting in their early retirement, we may assume that probably not more than 55 to 60 percent, or 17,600 to 19,200, of teachers retired under State plans are 65 or over.

[10] "Teacher Retirement Systems and Social Security," *Research Bulletin of the National Education Association*, Vol. XV, No. 3, May 1937. By September 1937, there were State-wide teacher retirement systems in 32 jurisdictions including 28 States, in 7 of which the laws became effective in 1937, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, the Canal Zone, and Puerto Rico. National Education Association of the United States, *List of State and Local Teacher Retirement Systems*, September 1937.

Municipal Pensions

Policemen and firemen.—Most of the larger, and many of the smaller, cities provide pensions for firemen, policemen, and teachers. In 1934, 228 or 85.4 percent of the cities of 30,000 population or over reported retirement systems for some or all of their employees.[12] Of the reporting cities 222 provided for old-age retirement. In the majority of cities only firemen and policemen were protected. In a number of the larger cities for which accurate data are available it is found that firemen and policemen tend to retire early, frequently in their fifties after 20 to 25 years of service.[13] In 1930 the United States Bureau of the Census reported 73,008 firemen in fire departments and 131,687 policemen, a total of 204,695. If it is assumed that all the employees in these two groups were covered by retirement systems, and if the number of retirants 65 and over constituted from 10 to 15 percent of the active force (the ratio is higher than among other public retirants), then between 20,500 and 30,750 firemen and policemen in the United States were 65 and over and were retired. For lack of a more accurate figure it will be assumed that there were some 25,000 in this category at the end of 1936.

Teachers.—The National Education Association reported 12,000 teachers in receipt of pensions

[11] U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Public Service Retirement Systems, United States, Canada, and Europe* (Washington, 1929), Bull. No. 477, pp. 83, 85.

[12] "Municipal Retirement Systems," *The Municipal Year Book, 1935*, The International City Managers' Association (Chicago, 1935), p. 210.

[13] In New York City in 1926 "the average age of service retirants [among policemen] was 54.87 years, and of disability retirants 47 years." U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bull. No. 477, p. 144. More recent information is made available through the Citizens Budget Commission of New York City which prepared a survey of pension provisions for police and firemen in 203 American cities. *New York Times*, Feb. 14, 1938.

under 59 local retirement systems early in 1937.[14] Of this number probably about 6,600 are 65 or over if the same age distribution obtains as has been assumed for teachers under State retirement plans.[15]

Other municipal employees.—In 1929 the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics summarized results of a survey it had made in 1927 of public retirement plans in the 18 cities having a population of 400,000 or over. In 1926 nine of the cities had plans for all city employees,[16] and there were 4,619 on the pension rolls exclusive of policemen, firemen, and teachers. Because of the limited retirement protection for municipal employees other than the three groups mentioned and because the pension rolls have increased slowly, it seems unlikely that there are in the United States more than 10,000 retired municipal employees, 65 and over, in addition to policemen, firemen, and teachers. We reach approximately the same estimate by another approach. At the end of 1936 there were 527,755 employees (excluding school personnel) in 816 cities or an estimated total of 680,000 (excluding school personnel) in all urban places of 2,500 or over.[17] Of this number upwards of 250,000 were firemen and policemen, leaving some 400,000 municipal employees in positions that were covered, if at all, by meager retirement systems. If we assume that the 5-percent ratio between retired and active employees, which is general for Federal employees and for teachers, is applicable to the 680,000 municipal employees, there might have been some 34,000 municipal pensioners at the end of 1936, including policemen, firemen, and other classes, but excluding teachers. In the present analysis we have placed the estimate at 25,000 policemen and firemen and 10,000 miscellaneous retirants, figures which would appear to mark upper limits for municipal retirants.

Private Industrial Pensions

M. W. Latimer estimated that 140,000 persons in the United States and Canada were receiving industrial pensions during 1931.[18] Latest available information for 1933 indicates there were not more than 165,000 pensioners at the end of that year,[19] and the number was probably not greater than 175,000 at the end of 1936. Making allowance for Canadian pensioners and for those under 65 years of age retired early for disability or other reasons, it seems unlikely that more than 150,000 persons 65 and over in the United States alone were receiving industrial pensions at the end of 1936. This estimate is arrived at by considering the ratio of total population in the United States to that in Canada and the ratio of group insurance business in the two countries. It is assumed that 5 percent of total industrial pensioners may be Canadians and that approximately 10 percent are under 65. An estimate of 150,000 private industrial pensioners, 65 and over, in the United States in 1936 appears to be liberal in view of the fact that at the beginning of 1935 there were 116,145 pensioners, including those under 65, in the United States *and* Canada, under plans operated by 145 companies and approximately 50 Class I railroads, as well as under all (405) industrial group annuity contracts. The number of employees *covered* by these various plans was 2,546,752 at the beginning of 1935.[20]

The total of 116,145 pensioners included about 53,000 pensioners of Class I railroads,[21] pensioners of all the more important companies in which are to be found the majority of employees covered by private pension plans, and the pensioners under group annuity contracts. The number in this last category was insignificant. Thus, on December 31, 1935, the 6 insurance companies underwriting the bulk of the group annuity business in the United States were paying pensions to only 6,587 employees.[22] That there were so few pen-

[14] Unpublished data.

[15] See discussion of retirants under State plans, *supra*, pp. 8-9.

[16] U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Care of Aged Persons in the United States*, Bull. No. 489 (Washington, 1929), p. 233.

[17] "Municipal Personnel Data," *The Municipal Year Book, 1937*, The International City Managers' Association (Chicago, 1937), p. 203.

[18] Latimer, Murray Webb, *Industrial Pension Systems in the United States and Canada*, Industrial Relations Counselors, Inc. (New York, 1932), p. 996.

[19] Data furnished to M. W. Latimer by Industrial Relations Counselors, Inc., New York.

[20] *Industrial Pension Systems in the United States and Canada.* Industrial Relations Counselors, Inc. (New York, 1936), pp. 18, 19, 21.

[21] The Railroad Retirement Board was paying pensions to only 1,000 railroad employees on Nov. 30, 1936, and did not take over the great majority of these employees until late in 1937. On Oct. 31, 1937, the Board had passed on, and accepted, 16,253 retirants, 8 percent of whom were under 65 years of age, and had taken over 46,899 retirants who had been receiving private pensions under railroad plans. (Unpublished data, Dec. 27, 1937.) On Nov. 30, 1937, a total of 73,378 individuals, including a few duplications, were on the annuity and pension rolls of the Railroad Retirement Board; monthly payments aggregated nearly $4.6 million. (*Annual Report of the Railroad Retirement Board for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1937* (Washington, 1938), p. 31.) At present March 1938), since railroad pensioners have been transferred to a Government plan, the number of other beneficiaries under private industrial pension plans may well be not more than 80,000 to 90,000.

[22] Robbins, Rainard B., *Preliminary Report on the Status of Industrial Pension Plans as Affected by Old-Age Benefit Sections of the Social Security Act* to the Committee on Social Security of the Social Science Research Council, (Washington, Mar. 21, 1936), p. 6.

sioners under group annuity plans is due in part to the fact that this type of protection is a recent development in the insurance field (the first group annuity contract having been written in 1921),[23] but more especially to high mortality prior to 65 and heavy labor turn-over. One actuary in 1929 expressed the opinion that "fifty percent of the present [group annuity] coverage will probably quit or die within the next twenty years." [24] That prediction was made before wholesale lay-offs during the depression radically reduced the already meager chances of industrial employees to benefit under private retirement systems.

Trade-Union Pensions

At the beginning of 1932, 25 unions maintained some system of relief for aged and for permanently and totally disabled members.[25] These unions included in their membership about 1.5 million workers constituting 45 percent of all trade-union members. The actual number of pensioners in trade-unions with active pension plans was slightly in excess of 10,000 in 1929.[26]

Not all trade-union pensioners are over 65. Members of certain unions are eligible for pensions at 60 or 62 years of age, although 65 is the most common age. Widows, frequently under 65, and persons retired for disability, generally under 65, are also beneficiaries. A study made in 1928 showed that of 2,954 recipients of pensions from the bricklayers' union, 76 were in receipt of disability pensions and 823 were widows; similarly 1,533 out of 4,467 persons receiving pensions from the locomotive engineers' union were widows.[27]

In 1928 trade-unions paid nearly $5 million in old-age benefits, in 1930 nearly $6 million, and in 1931 and 1932 over $6 million annually, but by 1935 benefit payments had dropped to less than $4 million.[28] Making allowance for pensioners retired for age before 65, for disability pensioners, and for widows under 65, there were undoubtedly fewer than 10,000 persons 65 and over in receipt of trade-union pensions at the end of 1936.

Other Private Pensions

In this group are included pensions paid to members of religious organizations, to college staffs, to members of fraternal organizations, and any other private pensions not included in the two previous groups. At the end of 1936 there were probably about 22,000 persons 65 and over receiving pensions from Protestant religious organizations. This estimate is based on the total of 32,000 pensioners reported to Congress early in 1935 by the Church Pensions Conference.[29] The total is estimated to have increased to about 33,000 at the end of 1936, and it is assumed that about one-third were widows under 65, children, or persons under 65 retired for disability.

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching reported that on June 30, 1936, there were 1,247 allowances and pensions in force in the United States, Canada, and Newfoundland for retired members of college staffs or for the dependents of deceased members.[30] On December 31, 1936, annuities were being paid to 1,361 teachers through the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association, a nonprofit corporation, the stock of which is held by the Carnegie Corporation.[31] This Association was chartered in 1918 to write annuities and life insurance for members of college staffs. During 1935 a new arrangement was entered into between the Carnegie Foundation and the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association whereby the former agreed to give the Association an endowment grant of $6,700,000 and to release its stock ownership. The total endowment grant is to be paid to the Association before

[23] Hohaus, Reinhard A., "Group Annuities," American Institute of Actuaries, *The Record*, Vol. XVIII, June 1929, p. 53.

[24] Burling, W. H., "Discussion of Paper by Hohaus on Group Annuities," American Institute of Actuaries, *The Record*, Vol. XVIII, October 1929, p. 256.

[25] Latimer, M. W., *Trade Union Pension Systems*, Industrial Relations Counselors, Inc. (New York, 1932), pp. 116, 128.

[26] Ibid., pp. 136-143.

[27] *Old Age and Disability Pensions*, S. Doc. No. 140, 70th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington, 1928), p. 155. Age-distribution data for trade-union pensioners are not available, but we know from experience under the New York State Retirement Plan that 55 percent of the female dependents of deceased beneficiaries or of employees dying from accidental causes were under 65 years of age. See *Operation of the [New York] State Employees' Retirement System*, op. cit., p. 46. In the Federal civil service, two-thirds (67.8 percent) of the annuitants retired for disability are under 65 years of age. See *Civil Service Retirement, Form 3013*, 1937, p. 6.

[28] U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Handbook of Labor Statistics 1936 Edition*, Bull. No. 616 (Washington, 1936), p. 392, and *Proceedings of the Fifty-sixth Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor* (held at Tampa, Fla., 1936), p. 64.

[29] U. S. House. Committee on Ways and Means, *Economic Security Act*. Hearings on H. R. 4120, 74th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington, 1935), p. 917.

[30] The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *Thirty-first Annual Report* (New York City, 1936), p. 103. See also U. S. Department of the Interior, Office of Education, *Insurance and Annuity Plans for College Staffs*, Bull. 1937, No. 5 (Washington, 1937).

[31] "Annuities," *The Spectator*, April 15, 1937, p. 8.

December 31, 1938;[32] the transfer of stock from the Foundation to the Association has been deferred for the present.[33] At the end of 1935 the Association had over 22,000 contracts of annuity and insurance outstanding. The policyholders were mainly in 150 institutions, but some were scattered thinly through 650 more.[34] In the year ended June 30, 1936, the Association paid allowances and pensions to 722 retired teachers and 525 widows, in a total amount of $1,870,234 ($1,403,648 to the teachers and $466,586 to the widows).[35] The average age at date of retirement for professors and officers in institutions associated with the Carnegie Foundation is 67.89 on the basis of age, 55.83 on the basis of service, and 58.41 on the basis of disability.[36] Here, as in the case of other retirement systems, many retirants are under 65.

The Harmon Association for the Advancement of Nursing was incorporated on December 27, 1926, for the purpose of developing a retirement system for registered nurses. The three national nursing organizations—The American Nurses' Association, The National League of Nursing Education, and The National Organization for Public Health Nursing—have cooperated in the plan,[37] which is a group annuity system under a contract made by one of the large life insurance companies.[38] According to the 1930 census, there were 294,189 registered nurses in the United States; 2,540 nurses have enrolled as members of the Harmon Association, and 29 have retired on average annuities of about $440 annually.[39]

The total number of private pensions paid to persons 65 and over in this miscellaneous group at the end of 1936 is estimated at 25,000, including 22,000 under denominational plans, about 1,000 by the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association (allowance being made for retirants and dependents under 65), possibly 300 by fraternal organizations, and a small number of pensions paid by scattered, unlisted organizations, by libraries and charitable institutions, and under the Harmon Association for the Advancement of Nursing.

Insurance Annuities

Insurance companies reported 205,425 individual annuities (including 1,371 of the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association) in force on December 31, 1936, with income then payable in an average amount of $370 per annuity for 1936.[40] After deducting teachers included in group 8 (table 1), almost 204,000 annuitants remain. An unknown number are under 65.

Other Resources

An arbitrary allowance has been made for 15,000 persons who might have been receiving types of pensions or annuities not here listed or who had some special form of income. Here are included beneficiaries of other private plans as well as an unknown number of persons such as secretaries, companions, servants, and others who may have been beneficiaries of grateful employers.

The Dependent

This group, comprising about two-thirds of all persons 65 and over, includes 1.6 million wholly or partially supported by public or private social agencies and 3.5 million who are primarily dependent on friends and relatives. The latter have no appreciable income and are not supported by organized social agencies.

Supported Wholly or Partially by Public or Private Social Agencies

In receipt of public assistance under the Social Security Act.—The Social Security Board reported 1,107,479 in receipt of old-age assistance under the Social Security Act during December 1936.[41] Payments were made from Federal, State, and local funds. It may here be noted that during the year 1937 there was an increase of about 500,000 recipients of old-age assistance, for it is estimated that approximately 1.6 million per-

[32] The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *Thirty-first Annual Report*, p. 22.

[33] Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association of America, *Nineteenth Annual Report to the Policyholders for 1937*, p. 4.

[34] The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *Thirty-first Annual Report*, p. 18.

[35] Ibid., p. 102.

[36] Ibid., p. 97.

[37] Harmon Association for the Advancement of Nursing, Inc., *Annuities for Nurses* (no date), p. 3. See also *Retirement Annuities Plan of the Harmon Association for the Advancement of Nursing* (April 1930).

[38] Harmon Association for the Advancement of Nursing, Inc., *Protected Retirement Incomes for Nurses* (*The Harmon Plan*) (May 1, 1936).

[39] Data furnished by Harmon Association to the National Education Association.

[40] "Annuities." *The Spectator*, April 15, 1937, p. 8.

[41] Social Security Board, Bureau of Research and Statistics, Division of Public Assistance Statistics, *Public Assistance, Monthly Statistics for the United States*, Vol. I, No. 12, December 1936, table 201.3-12. (595 persons from Alaska included.)

sons received this type of aid in December 1937.[42] This large increase undoubtedly represents to a considerable degree transfers to the old-age assistance rolls from poor relief, unemployment relief, private charity, and other forms of public or private assistance.

In addition to those receiving old-age assistance at the end of 1936, there were 28,971 recipients of aid to the blind,[43] of whom possibly one-fourth to one-third were 65 or over.[44] If an estimated 9,000 blind are added to the known 1,107,000 recipients of old-age assistance, there were 1,116,000 persons 65 or over receiving public assistance under the Social Security Act.

In receipt of emergency unemployment relief, of poor relief, or of old-age assistance not under the Social Security Act (noninstitutional care only).—At the beginning of 1935, it was estimated there were 700,000 persons 65 and over on the rolls of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration.[45] In addition an unknown number of aged persons were then receiving poor relief in their homes.

Since the passage of the Social Security Act in August 1935 and the withdrawal of Federal funds for emergency relief at the end of that year, there has been a double incentive to transfer the aged from general relief to old-age assistance rolls. The granting of old-age assistance under the Social Security Act has presumably reduced the number of appeals by the needy aged to poor relief authorities. The persons who, at the beginning of 1937, were applying for these two forms of general public assistance—unemployment relief and poor relief—were: those not eligible for old-age assistance because of residence, citizenship, age, or other requirements; persons in States not yet having old-age assistance laws; and persons in States with old-age pension laws who were eligible for assistance but were not receiving it because of administrative decisions or lack of funds. Statistics for these various classes are not available, but indirect evidence indicates that the needy aged were probably not depending to any great extent on forms of general assistance. Thus, during the quarter ending December 31, 1936, out of 266,363 applications for old-age assistance under the Social Security Act disposed of in 36 States, the District of Columbia, and Hawaii, 168,616 were granted and 97,747 were disposed of otherwise.[46] That is, about 100,000 aged persons who applied for assistance did not receive it. Those who were in genuine need presumably sought aid from other public agencies or from private sources. Possibly half of those who applied for old-age assistance and failed to receive it actually received general or poor relief in their homes. To this number must be added other persons 65 and over who were still on emergency relief rolls or in receipt of home relief from directors of the poor. Here may also be included approximately 2,500 persons in Arizona, which was the only State, at the end of 1936, administering State-wide old-age assistance under a State law but not under the Social Security Act. There were also about 700 persons in Nevada who received pensions under a county-option law which was inoperative in some counties, and about 500 pensioners in Alaska. Neither of these jurisdictions was operating under the Social Security Act. During 1936, 18 States and the District of Columbia failed to make old-age assistance payments prior to approval of State plans under the Social Security Act. These States either had no old-age assistance laws or had laws but made no payments. It would appear to be liberal to allow for a total of 200,000 aged persons in receipt of general relief, of poor relief, or of old-age assistance not under the Social Security Act at the end of 1936.

In receipt of earnings or subsistence payments under the Works Program, December 1936.—On June 30, 1936, the Works Progress Administration reported 51,942 persons 65 and over on its rolls (i. e., 2.4 percent of the total).[47] The number of persons employed under the Works Program, who

[42] See p. 46, table 5, this issue of the Bulletin.

[43] *Public Assistance, Monthly Statistics for the United States*, Vol. II, No. 8, August 1937, table 200.2.

[44] A sample analysis of age distribution of persons accepted for aid to the blind under the Social Security Act showed that 37 percent were 65 and over. (Preliminary Tabulation for Fiscal Year 1936–37 of *Social Data About Recipients of Aid to the Blind*, Social Security Board, Bureau of Research and Statistics, Division of Public Assistance Statistics, Sept. 25, 1937, table 29.) This percentage is too high for the United States as a whole because it is unduly weighted by the large number of blind in one State who are 65 or over.

[45] Data cited by Edwin E. Witte, *Economic Security Act*, Hearings on H. R. 4120, op. cit., p. 38.

[46] Social Security Board, Bureau of Research and Statistics, Division of Public Assistance Statistics, *Public Assistance, Quarterly Review of Statistics for the United States*, Vol. 1, No. 4, December 1936 (Washington, Apr. 1, 1937), table 201.1. Note also that out of 468,096 recipients accepted for old-age assistance during a selected period in 1936-37, 98,822 had received general relief or other public aid within the month prior to acceptance. *Second Annual Report of the Social Security Board* (Washington, 1937), p. 152, table C-28.

[47] *First Deficiency Appropriation Bill for 1937*, Extract from Hearings before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives, in Charge of Deficiency Appropriations, 75th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington, 1937), p. 153.

were certified as in need of relief, declined until at the end of December 1936 the total was about 2.3 million (2,071,287 under Works Progress Administration and 211,297 under other Federal agencies,[48] not counting 325,525 [49] enrollees in the Civilian Conservation Corps who were under 65). If the ratio of those 65 and over to all persons employed under the Works Progress Administration continued to December 1936 and was applicable to other employees under the Works Program (exclusive of CCC enrollees), there were probably some 55,000 in this age group under the Works Program. It is also possible that some 3,000 persons in the 134,809 cases certified for subsistence payments by the Resettlement Administration in December 1936 may have been 65 or over although there is no satisfactory basis for this judgment. Altogether, possibly 58,000 persons 65 or over were receiving wages or subsistence payments under the Works Program.

In receipt of organized private charity.—Organized private charity for the aged has most commonly taken the form of institutional care in homes for the aged. (See *infra*, page 16.) Trust funds have been created for the establishment and maintenance of homes, but little provision seems to have been made for noninstitutional care of the aged by private agencies. A study made of these provisions in New York City in 1928, prior to the passage of the State old-age assistance law, showed that possibly 3,350 persons, including females over 60 and males over 65, or less than 1 percent of the aged in these groups, received noninstitutional care from private agencies.[50] Out of approximately 300 churches and agencies reporting on their relief activities, only one-half gave any aid to the aged. Out of over 1,000 Protestant churches in New York City, definite reports were received from only 140, of which 86 reported they gave no relief to the aged. Twenty churches reported aiding 50 aged persons, while 34 churches aided 94. The 54 churches spent less than $20,000 on old-age assistance during 1927.[51] These data show the extent of private aid to the needy aged in their homes in the largest, wealthiest city in the United States. Presumably such aid was much less in small cities and rural areas having few or no private agencies.

In December 1936, 502 relief agencies in 118 urban areas spent over $35,000,000 from public funds, including over $7,000,000 for old-age assistance, while 464 private agencies during the same month spent only a little over $1,000,000 on all their cases, including, we may surmise, a negligible amount for the aged.[52] Pressure on private agencies is so great and limitation of funds so pronounced that it is clear the aged can count on little from this source. These agencies concentrate their limited funds on family care, particularly on needs of children, and generally refer long-time care for the aged to public agencies. It is doubtful if as many as 10,000 aged persons are receiving any appreciable support from private agencies. (Sporadic, nominal gifts from churches and meals and lodgings from the Salvation Army and similar organizations are here excluded.) Exception may be taken to this figure as being too low. However, it might be doubled or trebled without changing the fact that the number of aged who receive regular support from private *organized* charity is negligible.

In public homes.—Some public homes are almost exclusively for the aged, while others are more general in character and are used for persons of all ages and of varying needs. County homes, poor farms, infirmaries, and public homes for the aged have been classed by the United States Bureau of the Census as almshouses for want of a better generic term.[53] Some of the local homes are thoroughly modern, efficiently operated institutions, while others are antiquated and poorly managed. State and Federal homes for the aged are in the main operated for aged or disabled veterans, although there are a few State homes for civilians.

Since we lack satisfactory criteria for classifying the types of public homes in which the aged may

[48] *Public Assistance, Monthly Statistics for the United States*, Vol. II, No. 8, August 1937, table 200.2.

[49] Unpublished data furnished by Division of Public Assistance Research, Bureau of Research and Statistics, Social Security Board.

[50] "The Noninstitutional Aged Poor," report prepared by the Welfare Council on aged dependents cared for outside of institutions by private agencies in New York City. *The American Labor Legislation Review*, Vol. XIX, No. 3, June 1929, p. 210.

[51] Ibid., pp. 209–210.

[52] Social Security Board, Bureau of Research and Statistics, Division of Public Assistance Statistics, *Changes During December 1936 in Different Types of Public and Private Relief in Urban Areas*, Mar. 20, 1937, p. 3. It is further reported that in 1936 out of $34.6 million raised by 112 community chests only 1.4 percent was appropriated for care of the aged. (Community Chests and Councils, Inc., *Questions and Answers About Community Chests and Councils* (New York, 1937), p. 18.)

[53] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Paupers in Almshouses, 1923* (Washington, 1925), p. 2. Institutions supported or controlled by State authorities are sometimes included under almshouses. They are separated in this analysis. Almshouse data are unreliable.

be found, we may for convenience divide them according to the sources of funds used for maintenance into:

Local homes, almshouses, county homes, poor farms, and infirmaries.—In these various local institutions are to be found the friendless and destitute of all ages, the infirm, delinquent, dependent, and defective. County homes and poor farms, which have been condemned in the main as expensive to operate [54] and as socially inadequate to meet the needs of the aged, will probably be supplanted in time and the aged who are without friends or relatives or homes of their own and who require institutional care will be provided for in more appropriate ways. Prior to the depression the number of persons 65 and over in almshouses (including local public homes for the aged and other local institutions) did not increase as rapidly as their number in the general population. In the early thirties, the almshouse population rose rather sharply in certain areas; some areas report a decline since the introduction of old-age assistance.[55] It may be estimated that about 50,000 persons 65 or over are now in almshouses, local public homes for the aged, and other institutions maintained by local public funds.

State and Federal veterans' homes and State homes for civilians.—These are definitely homes for the aged and for disabled veterans who have been honorably discharged. Nine of the most important of the Federal homes reported in 1928 that about half of their residents were 60 years of age and over.[56] The same ratio holds for 48 State homes.[57] It is assumed that the number of aged residents in these homes has not greatly increased since the last official count made in 1928, in view of the fact that Civil War Veterans are dying and World War veterans are usually not old enough yet to come into the aged group. The total 65 and over is believed not to exceed 17,000.

In hospitals for mental disease.—The United States Bureau of the Census reported 432,290 patients in hospitals for mental disease at the end of 1936. This total included 364,403 in State hospitals, 21,960 in hospitals of the Veterans' Administration, 34,902 in county and city hospitals, and 11,025 in private hospitals.[58] To this number should be added a possible 500 patients in seven State psychopathic hospitals.[59] The population in this last group of hospitals does not vary greatly from year to year, since the service offered is largely diagnostic and not long-time treatment. If a further allowance is made for patients in the psychopathic wards of general hospitals,[60] we arrive at a grand total of about 434,400 patients hospitalized because of mental disease at the end of 1936.

There is no information available about the age distribution of these patients in 1936. The latest age data for the total resident population in hospitals for mental disease are those published by the Bureau of the Census for the year 1923;[61] 12.8 percent of all first admissions during 1922 (71,676) and 13.0 percent of the resident population in hospitals for mental disease on January 1, 1923 (265,829), were 65 and over.[62] That is, the proportion of persons in this age group was essentially the same for first admissions and for all patients in hospitals. The same relationship obtained that year in New York where 13.9 percent of all first admissions and 13.8 percent of the total resident population were 65 and over, and in Massachusetts where corresponding figures were 14.1 and 14.8 percent, respectively.

The Bureau of the Census reports that 16.6 percent of all first admissions to hospitals for mental disease in the United States in 1933 were 65 and over.[63] If this ratio is applied to the total number of patients in such hospitals in 1936, there were approximately 72,000 persons 65 and over in this category on December 31, 1936. The ratio may have been slightly higher or lower, but the possible error would not amount to more than one-tenth of 1 percent of all aged persons.

In prisons and jails.—On January 1, 1933, there were 201,433 sentenced prisoners in the civil

[54] Stewart, Estelle M., *The Cost of American Almshouses*, U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bull. No. 386 (Washington, 1925).

[55] Steele, Glenn, "Number of Aged in Public and in Private Institutions, 1930," *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 34, No. 2, February 1932, pp. 253-261. See p. 42, this issue of the Bulletin for data on almshouse care in later years.

[56] *Care of Aged Persons in the United States*, op. cit., 1929, pp. 64, 65.

[57] Ibid., p. 81.

[58] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Patients in All Hospitals for Mental Disease: 1936*, release dated Jan. 10, 1938.

[59] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Patients in Hospitals for Mental Disease: 1935* (Washington, 1937), p. 51. Number of patients in State psychopathic hospitals at beginning of 1935, 518; at end of 1935, 527.

[60] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Patients in Hospitals for Mental Disease: 1933* (Washington, 1935), p. 136.

[61] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Patients in Hospitals for Mental Disease: 1923* (Washington, 1926), p. 30.

[62] Ibid., pp. 30-31, 136-143.

[63] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Patients in Hospitals for Mental Disease: 1933* (Washington, 1935), p. 35.

penal institutions of the United States, according to an estimate made by the United States Bureau of the Census on the basis of reports at least 90 percent complete.[64] Of this total, 51,436 were in county and municipal prisons and 149,997 were in State and Federal prisons. Out of a reported total of 41,261 prisoners in county and city jails, 619 were 65 and over. On the basis of the estimated total of 51,436, there were 772 prisoners 65 and over in local jails on January 1, 1933. Out of a total of 65,697 prisoners received in State and Federal prisons and reformatories during 1935, 517, or 0.8 percent, were 65 and over.[65] Applying this ratio to the total number of prisoners in these institutions on December 31, 1935 (123,464),[66] we conclude that fewer than 1,000 of them (988) were 65 and over. Thus, the total number of persons 65 and over in all civil penal institutions was less than 2,000 at the beginning of 1936 and was probably still under 2,000 at the end of that year, since the total prison population in State and Federal prisons and reformatories (including parolees and others outside the prisons) decreased slightly during 1936.[67] At the end of 1935 there were fewer than 244 prisoners in Federal military and naval prisons, of whom about 20 were 35 and over;[68] the number 65 and over is thus negligible.

In private homes for the aged.—Numerous private groups support homes for the aged. Religious, fraternal, nationality, and other groups, and labor organizations such as trade-unions operate probably between one and two thousand of these homes. Their total capacity is in excess of 100,000 and the number of residents 65 and over is probably slightly in excess of 50,000. Many of the residents are under 65 but are admitted because of disability or because they are needy widows of deceased members of trade, fraternal, or other groups.[69] More than half (653) of 1,021 homes that reported to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics in 1928 had, on the average, less than 50 residents, while about one-third (381) had less than 25.[70] There are over 500 religious homes including those for members of various religious denominations and those for ministers and their wives or widows, priests and other members of Catholic organizations, and members of Jewish organizations.[71] Upwards of 400 private homes are operated for the benefit of particular classes of persons, such as actors, artists, writers, seamen, and widows. Fraternal organizations like the Masons, Odd Fellows, and Knights of Pythias operate over 100 private homes,[72] and trade-unions reported 5 homes in 1928.[73] There has been no count of residents in private homes since that made in 1928. The depression undoubtedly caused some increase in the number of aged persons seeking this type of care. On the other hand, the operation of the Social Security Act has probably made it possible for many persons to avoid entering homes.

Other.—An arbitrary allowance is made for 10,000 persons who may be receiving some other form of assistance not here listed.

Dependent on Friends and Relatives

If we assume for the sake of argument that all aged persons with incomes (group A, table 1) and all those under the care of public or private social agencies (group B-1) are able to depend entirely on these means of livelihood, there would remain about 3.5 million persons 65 and over (about 45 percent of the total) without earnings, savings, property, pensions, annuities, or any other independent means of livelihood and at the same time not in receipt of any form of organized public or private assistance and not under the care of any penal institution or hospital for mental disease. Presumably these 3.5 million persons must be wholly dependent on friends or relatives (group B-2). It may be noted here that the New York State Commission on Old Age Security estimated that 50.4 percent of persons 65 and over in that State on July 1, 1929, were primarily dependent on friends and relatives for support.[74]

[64] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *County and City Jails, Prisoners in Jails and Other Penal Institutions under County or Municipal Jurisdiction: 1933* (Washington, 1935), p. 3.

[65] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Prisoners in State and Federal Prisons and Reformatories: 1935* (Washington, 1937), p. 37.

[66] Ibid., p. 2.

[67] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Prisoners in State and Federal Prisons and Reformatories: 1936*, release dated Sept. 17, 1937.

[68] Ibid., pp. 84-85. (Rate for military and naval prisoners 35 and over received from courts in 1935 applied to prison population at end of year.)

[69] *Care of Aged Persons in the United States*, op. cit., pp. 15, 128, 175, 184, 191.

[70] Ibid., p. 15.

[71] Ibid., pp. 128-130.

[72] Ibid., p. 160.

[73] Ibid., p. 90; also Latimer, M. W., *Trade Union Pension Systems*, op. cit., pp. 182-183.

[74] The New York State Commission on Old Age Security, *Old Age Security*, op. cit., p. 39.