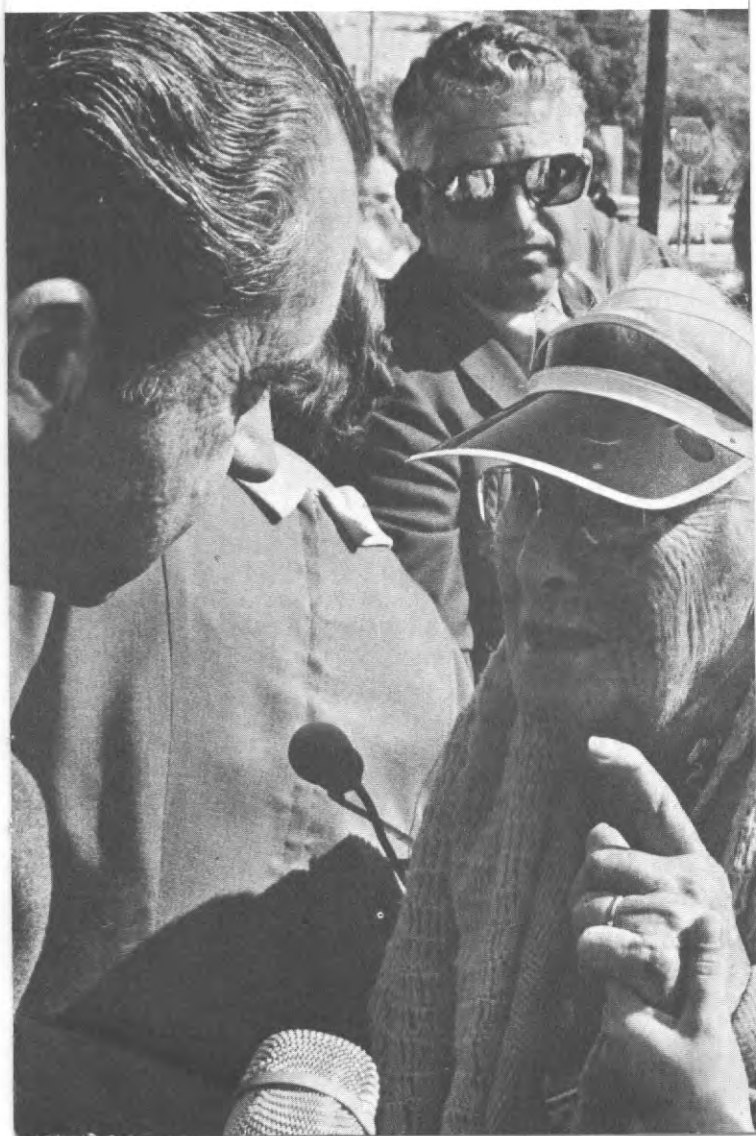


THE PRESIDENT CARES



“The time has come for a new attitude toward old age in America . . . to stop regarding older Americans as a burden and start regarding them as a resource . . .”

—President Nixon

Richard Nixon had long been aware of the problems faced by the elderly. As a congressman and senator, he handled many of their cases personally. And as Vice President, he talked to thousands more across the country about their individual problems.

Soon after his inauguration as President, he started researching what his Administration could best do to help. He had advice from experts on the subject, from congressional committees, from those who had worked with the elderly. But what he really needed were recommendations from the elderly themselves.

President Nixon started organizing what was to be the second White House Conference on Aging in the history of the United States. He called together some 5,000 older Americans for four days of discussions. The result of those talks has been the base for many of the President's proposals.

What were some of the problems discussed? What has the President done about them? What is he planning to do?

Let's take a look:

The Problem: Inflation's effect on income.

The President knew that the elderly's fixed incomes had been no match for the fast-rising cost of living. Inflation had taken a severe toll, and relief had to be provided. One of the top priorities had to be the provision of more money.

Under President Nixon, benefits in social security increased 51 per cent in 3½ years. Most significant was the recent 20 per cent raise which also included the President's recommendation for automatic cost of living increases in the future.

President Nixon also proposed raising widow's benefits and liberalizing the retirement earnings test.

The Problem: Health costs.

President Nixon found that health costs had risen 170 per cent in the past 10 years. While he couldn't stop the increase in fees, he could affect health benefits. Thus . . .

21 million people—nearly every American 65 or over—will be enrolled in Medicare by the end of 1973. Medicare this year will pay: \$6.5 billion in hospital bills for some 7.2 million hospital admissions . . . and \$2.6 billion toward doctors bills of some 11.3 million persons.

The \$5.80 monthly premium for Medicare is henceforth to be paid for by the government—worth another \$1.5 billion to the nation's elderly.

The Problem: Housing.

The President had seen much of it himself—some 30 per cent of the nation's senior citizens are forced to live in substandard housing. This not only affects the elderly's standard of living, but their state of mind, their self-pride, their sense of purpose.

The President urged an increase in housing units available to the elderly. Since his election, public housing units occupied by older Americans have increased by almost 60 per cent—from 230,000 to 360,000.

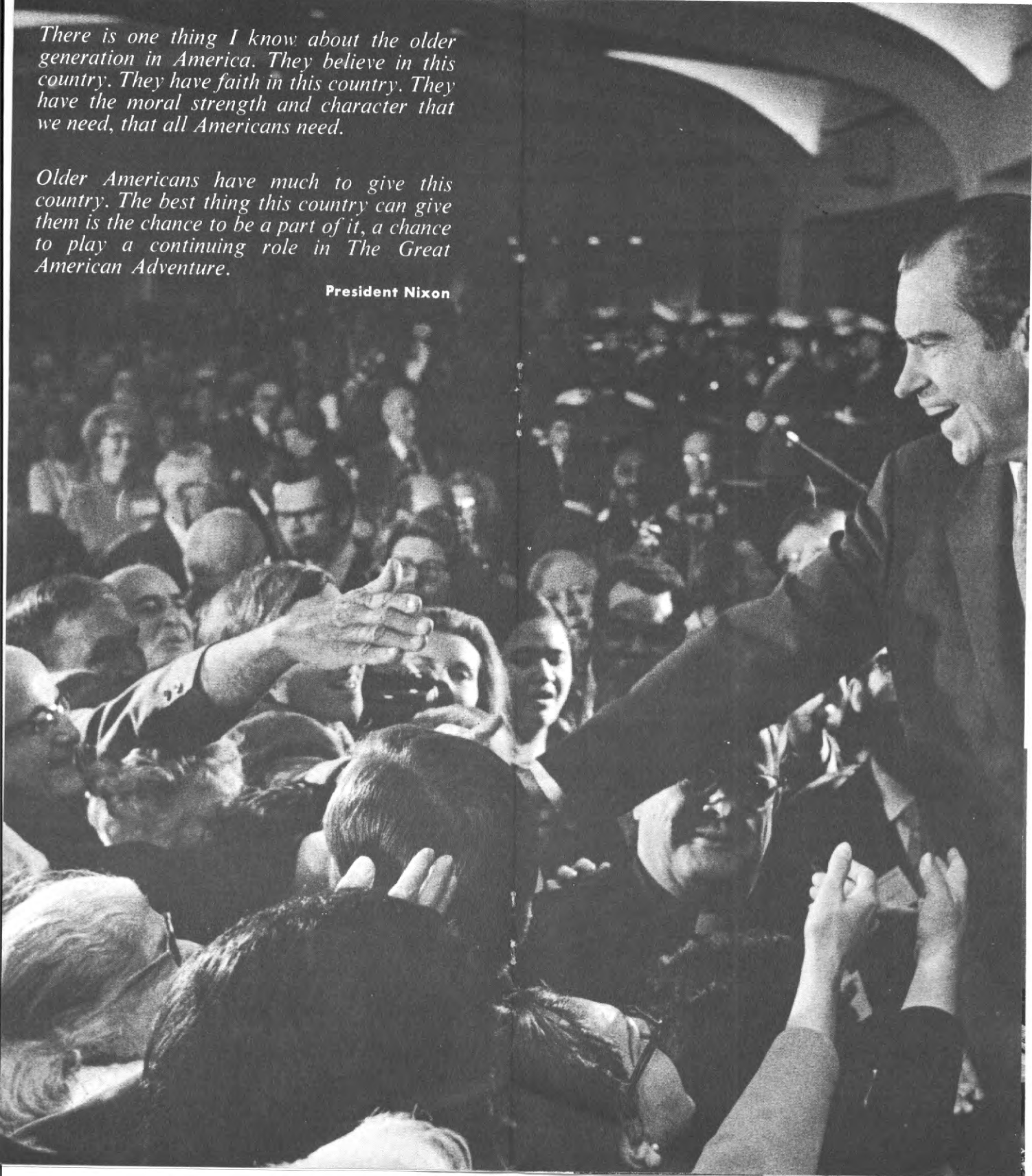
The Problem: Continued involvement in life.

Older Americans often face serious personal adjustments. Those who've spent a lifetime at a meaningful job suddenly find that retirement means the loss of fulfillment. Realizing this, President Nixon

There is one thing I know about the older generation in America. They believe in this country. They have faith in this country. They have the moral strength and character that we need, that all Americans need.

Older Americans have much to give this country. The best thing this country can give them is the chance to be a part of it, a chance to play a continuing role in The Great American Adventure.

President Nixon



asked for an emphasis on programs to help combat the problem. And he backed up his request with funds:

- A *five-fold* increase in the Administration on Aging's budget, to step up significantly our efforts to develop and coordinate a wide range of social and nutritional services for older Americans.
- A *tripling* of funds for the Retired Senior Volunteer Program, which utilizes skills of the elderly in volunteer projects across the country.
- A *doubling* of funds for the Foster Grandparents Program, in which low-income elderly work with disadvantaged children in hospitals, correctional institutions and day-care centers.

The Problem: Inadequate nutrition.

Inadequate nutrition among the elderly can be related to many things: lack of money to buy food, lack of knowledge of what to buy, difficulties in transportation, not being aware of the resources. Alleviating these problems will help, of course. But the President thought the elderly needed a more direct solution:

Project FIND. At the President's request, a major outreach effort is being launched to find older Americans in need of food or assistance and inform them of available aids.

A National Nutrition Program. When fully in effect, this program will provide 250,000 hot meals a day for the elderly.

The Problem: Making government work.

The President understood that a comprehensive approach within the Government was needed

towards the problems of the elderly to ensure maximum impact from the money available.

In order to better coordinate programs for the elderly, the President did some reorganizing. He established a Cabinet-level Committee on Aging, appointed a Special Assistant on Aging and a Special Consultant on Aging, and has called for coordinated planning in all federally-funded programs.

What will the President do for the elderly in the future?

The President is determined to continue his Administration's achievements on behalf of older Americans. Some specifics on how he plans to do so:

Pension Reform: Tax incentives to encourage broader coverage, and legislation to insure the sound administration of pension funds.

Tax Reform Legislation: President Nixon's plan would allow a single person aged 65 or over to receive up to \$5,100 of tax-free income. A married couple with both partners over 65 would receive about \$8,000 in tax-free income.



Nursing Home Reform: The President's eight-point program includes the training of 1,100 additional state nursing home inspectors . . . the consolidation and expansion of federal efforts to enforce nursing home standards . . . new efforts to train nursing home employees . . . and a strong commitment to cut off Medicare and Medicaid funds to hopelessly substandard homes.

Property Tax Relief: This will be realized through enactment of the President's federal revenue sharing proposals by Congress.

National Health Insurance: Under this plan, a comprehensive approach to medical care for all our citizens will be ensured.

A time of fulfillment.

Old age, President Nixon has said, should be a time of pride and fulfillment—both in looking forward and in looking back. He told the White House Conference on Aging that older Americans are perhaps the greatest untapped resource the country has. *"We are not taking advantage of a tremendous reservoir of skill and wisdom and moral strength that our Nation desperately needs at this moment in its history,"* he said.

But all that is history. From now on, older Americans will be seen (and their skills will be utilized) in a new light. Because President Nixon knows that America needs them. Because *President Nixon cares.*

"The vast majority of Americans over 65 years of age are eager and able to play a continuing role as active, independent participants in the life of our country. Encouraging them to play this role—and providing greater opportunities for them—is a cornerstone of this Administration's policy concerning older Americans."

**President Nixon
Nashua, New Hampshire
August 6, 1971**