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Speech by Adam Graycar:

"Accommodation for elderly people"

presented at the Australian Retired Persons
Association National Conference, Melbourne, 19th
April 1989

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ARPA

National Conference, Melbourne

19th April 1989

Accommodation

Adam Graycar

ARPA

19/4/89

Natl Conf

Accom

Melbourne

Adam Graycar

Issues - fiction - radiator / Youthman - concerned about it

- ① Grand Canyon
- ② Trouble with part of the people, by the people x for the people is that the people not believe it is in the public
- ③ At least hopefully govt can diagnose what is being paid for - put it right - cold - take bath - stand naked in draught - cure cold - pneumonia

Our older population is very much differentiated by age, by sex, by class, by ethnicity, by spatial location, and by health status.

The range of needs and demands, wishes and hopes, desires and aspirations is as broad and diverse as is our older population.

The four main issues for a person facing retirement are income - having enough and having it regularly; ^② having adequate health care; ^③ having appropriate living and housing arrangements; and ^④ having interest and purpose in life. Old people are not at all different from their younger contemporaries in the requirement that life must have some meaning. We have made advances in recent years in the first three of these areas, income, health, accommodation. The fourth issue, interest and purpose in life is often the least recognised and most neglected. Yet it is the heart of many of the difficulties in retirement. Processes of life enrichment are being seen by governments as important, especially in view of the fact that many people can expect to have twenty or thirty years of retirement.

From the viewpoint of elderly people themselves, the question of accommodation is a crucial one. Their housing takes on an increasing importance, not only in a financial sense but also psychologically. Moreover, most elderly people - inasmuch as we can generalise - spend more time in their homes than do people of working-age: although some have a full and active social life and a few are still in employment, the increased 'leisure' of retirement (at least for men aged 65 and over) means more time spent 'at home'.

note

- 1. at any time, most elderly people do not have a 'housing problem'.
- 2. the vast majority of elderly people wish to live in their own home, even if they have difficulties looking after themselves (or the home).

Similarly, for those with physical limitations, the home environment is often all-encompassing. For this reason the quality and design of the dwelling takes on a heightened importance. Retirement is often also accompanied by a reduction in income and thus the housing circumstances of elderly people are likely to determine how they fare financially. For those who own their own homes, this represents a substantial asset (perhaps their only form of wealth). Their housing costs are reduced to rates (which may be rebated) and maintenance. For private tenants, however, rent consumes an increasing proportion of diminished resources: this is in addition to the lack of security and poor repair often apparent in this form of tenure.

In addressing Accommodation for Elderly People, we recognise that elderly people, more so than any other age group, are spread across a broad range of accommodation types.

Table

TABLE 4

PERSONS AGED 60 OR OVER, 1981:
TYPE OF DWELLING BY SEX

2500000

Type of dwelling	Males	Per cent	Females	All 60+
Private dwelling 2 300 000	91.9		90.2	90.9 1,850,000
Non-private dwelling:				
Hospital, not mental (public & private) 38 000	1.5		1.5	1.5
Mental hospital	0.3		0.2	0.2
Nursing home 79,000	1.9		4.1	3.1
Hostel Home for the aged 45,000	0.8		1.7	1.3
Boardinghouse/private hotel 12 500	0.7		0.3	0.5
Hotel/motel 17 000	0.9		0.5	0.7
Caravan park 30 000	1.5		0.9	1.2
Staff quarters 5 000	0.2		0.1	0.2
Convent/monastery 5 000	<0.1		0.3	0.2
Other non-private	0.3		0.2	0.3
Total non-private dwellings	8.1		9.8	9.1
Total	100		100	100
N. of persons 60+ ('000)	888.7		1,140.4	2,029

Source: V. Staines(1984) based on 1981 census material

Ac subject
 Orkney from 1981
 all 8 Hill
 musical - 100% or 100%
 3 pushing vocal - have call

In very broad terms there are three different sections of the aged population whose housing needs are quite distinct. Firstly, by far the largest group is the independent elderly people, whose major need is for sound and affordable housing, well-located and well-maintained. The second group consists of elderly people who need some support in order to live comfortably. For instance, The Ageing and the Family study of 1050 elderly people in Sydney found that around half of the sample required help with low level needs (eg transport, minor home maintenance, gardening) and rather less than one third needed help with shopping or housekeeping. In terms of housing, the needs of this group are largely for:

- housing that is sound and affordable, as with all elderly people

- housing that is suitable for their physical condition eg aids and adaptations to ease mobility, communication equipment

- . services which are home-based, both in terms of delivery and their focus. There is scope here for services which assist with housework and home maintenance. Services should be facilitated, not hampered, by the nature of the housing.
- . location of housing is of growing importance eg proximity to shops, doctor, etc.

The final group is dependent elderly people, whose housing needs are different again. Dependence takes several forms: physical and mental infirmities are the most readily apparent. To date, the most frequent accommodation outcome for those who are unable to care for themselves properly has been institutionalisation, moving in with younger family members or else living in highly unsatisfactory or even dangerous conditions. However, dependency can take other forms: social factors may mean that some elderly people are pushed prematurely into needing help. Insufficient financial resources may mean that elderly people may be forced to live in unsuitable housing, especially those who are not home owners, and may be unable to afford the simple modifications or equipment which would enable them to live independently and longer in their own homes. Social conditioning also means that some older women are forced to relinquish their independence for want of knowing how to perform minor household repairs.

Make ~~with~~ needs & allowances
do it right - Front Key

Beat That!

A FRENCH toyshop had been doing a roaring trade since this sign was placed in its window: "A free gift will be sent to your child whether you buy or not."

"Do you really keep your promise?" asked one mother.

"Certainly, madame. Every time a parent makes a purchase from us, we send their child a fine parlour game."

"And for children whose parents walk out without buying anything?"

"We send them a drum."

— Mina and André Guillois

TABLE 9.2. AVAILABLE COMBINATION OF

Housing solution	Provision costs to government	HOUSING TYPE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION
Dependent housing solution	High	INDEPENDENT LIVING • Owner/buyer of own home • Private renter/lodger • Improvised dwellings • Caravans	independent housing solution. Domiciliary and support services available.
		MULTI-GENERATIONAL FAMILY LIVING • extended families • movable units	housing with friends/relatives. Domiciliary and support services available.
		AGED PERSON HOUSING ** • Ministry of Housing units	independent housing in government-funded rented units. Domiciliary and support services available.
		• HOUSING FOR DISABLED	Specially designed units to allow independent living for aged/disabled.
		RETIREMENT VILLAGES • funded by voluntary/organisations/government • resident funded	independent housing, usually with meals and nursing available. Often, hostel, nursing home place promised.
		ROOMING HOUSES • apartment houses • lodging houses • boarding houses	Serviced or unserviced. Furnished lockable rooms for at least 4 lodgers. casual accommodation. furnished accommodation and meals for at least 6 persons.
		• CONGREGATE HOUSING	specially designed units with or without caretaker/warden.
		SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION HOUSES	boarding houses with more than 2 lodgers over 60 years or in receipt of any type (age, invalid, repat. pension).
		HOMES FOR THE AGED	communal housing with meals/health care.
		HOSTELS • independent hostels • hostels attached to retirement villages	communal housing with meals/health care, govt. subsidised for capital and running costs.
INTERMEDIATE CARE • frail and confused aged hostels	specially designed hostels for aged with special need.		
SKILLED NURSING FACILITIES • independent nursing homes • nursing homes attached to retirement villages. • 'approved' hospital beds	long-term accommodation for aged people totally dependent on nursing support.		
INTENSIVE CARE • hospitals • hospices	long/short-term accommodation with medical/nursing care. Program of care for patients with short life expectancy.		
	Moderately high		
	Moderate		
	Very low		

Source: IDC Report (M. Hannaford, 1983)

HOUSING/SERVICES, VICTORIA 1983

