American Association for Old Age Security

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Aim: To seek the establishment of adequate protection of the dependent aged either by means of state or Federal old age pensions or by contibutory insurance plans.

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November 7, 1929

Miss Ida Tarbell
120 E. 19th St.
N.Y., N.Y.

My dear Miss Tarbell:

Nothing is more pitiful and heartrending than old age when it is surrounded by neglect and poverty. Almost 2,000,000 old folks in the United States stand on the brink of that dreaded despair - the Poorhouse. Sickness, unemployment, hardluck and bad investments may be the cause of it. To be old and forsaken! Not to be able to spend one's last years in comfort and happiness, among the loves and friendships of a lifetime! What a tragedy to an honest old man or woman after a lifetime of work!

We believe you agree with Governor Roosevelt that "the time has surely come when society cannot contemplate without a blush a policy of sending old men and women who have outlived their capacity to work and have no means, to poor farms, which belong to that past barbaric age when we chained our insane to the walls of our madhouses."

In New York a Commission is now investigating the subject. You realize, of course, that no matter how thorough and favorable the Commission's recommendations might be no constructive legislative action will be possible until public opinion in this State is thoroughly educated to the necessity of old age security and is intelligently organized to back up its demand for a sensible, economical and humane way of taking care of our old folks.

Will you help us to stop our present brutal practice of separating an old couple into different institutions after a lifetime of happiness together?

Very sincerely yours,

Francis J. McConnell

President.

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