

## INSTITUTIONAL REFORM

We must, and we can, restore confidence in government. We can do so by being honest with ourselves and with the people of this nation. We can do so by defining problems convincingly, and by thoroughly and openly considering the advantages and disadvantages of every alternative solution relative to the problems. We can do so by clearly stating the funding, manpower, and other implications of any proposed solution over an extended period of time.

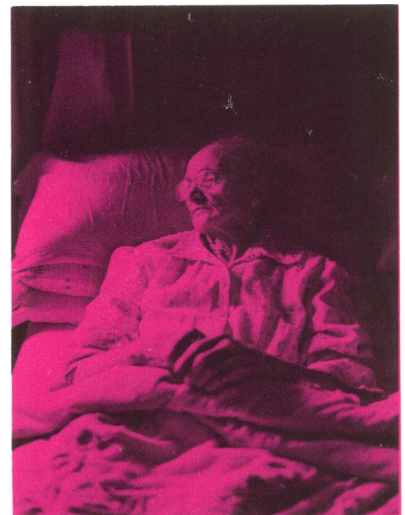
We can do so by insuring that the funds entrusted to us are effectively and efficiently spent, for the cost of our failure in this regard is not the loss of money but that we would have spent it better elsewhere. We can help restore confidence in government if we, and others, recognize that we and other taxpayers will probably seldom ever be willing to allocate the total amount that would be needed to do one of society's large jobs completely. We can help by insuring that only the smallest possible shortfall between promise and performance can be attributed to us. . . .

The objective of institutional reform responds to what I believe to be basic perceptions and values in our society. All of us can agree, I think, that in a vast, increasingly urban increasingly homogenized society, the most critically needed changes in our institutions are those which increase their humane responsiveness. Institutions and their activities, after all, do not exist for their own sakes; they exist for people. Where programs are rigid, they must be made flexible; where programs suffer from hardening of the categories, they must be made accessible.

We must seek to assure that the agencies, organizations, and skills that are capable of making some contribution to the protection and development of human resources are wisely deployed. The great needs and high expectations of those who use our human service institutions require that these institutions be made to work as efficiently and as effectively as possible. Overlap, waste, duplication, jurisdictional jealousies, persistence in outmoded methods—any or all of these things can only drive a wedge between promise and performance. We cannot afford them; we must not tolerate them.

—Excerpted from a speech by Elliot L. Richardson, Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, before the employees of HEW, December 17, 1971, in Washington, D.C.

*Cover* — Almost 1 million elderly Americans require a degree of care that can be found only in a nursing home. Nursing home surveyors play a key role in insuring that homes and extended care facilities meet the standards specified for Medicare. The many duties of surveyors are detailed in an article beginning on page 108. Photo by Arthur Tress.



# HSMHA HEALTH Reports

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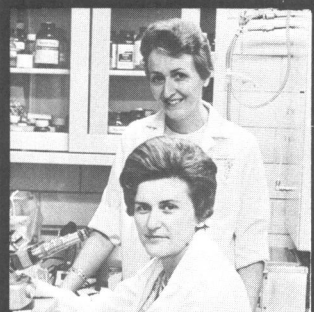
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