CURRENT LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS
TO AMEND THE
SOCIAL SECURITY ACT*

1. Official Documents


Deals with issues of policy, rather than organizational structure, in the old-age and survivors' insurance and public assistance programs. Presents various alternative policies and recommends reconsideration of the insurance system by a legislative commission before substantial changes are made in the existing law.


Describes administrative techniques developed in Chile, Czechoslovakia, France, and Great Britain and, more briefly, those in use in seven other countries.


These three studies are important reading for those interested in future costs of the old-age and survivors' insurance system under the present Act and under the various proposals for expansion.

*Items from this list should be ordered directly from the publisher. Addresses are given in connection with each reference.

A state-by-state analysis of old-age assistance payments and old-age and survivors’ insurance benefits as of June 30, 1946 which shows the differing patterns in the urban and rural states.


Brings together a wealth of statistical and other data on experience under the Social Security Act, problems which have arisen, and proposals for revision.


The reports included in this document cover old-age and survivors’ insurance, permanent and total disability insurance, public assistance, and unemployment insurance. They analyze the weaknesses and inequities in the existing social insurance and public assistance programs and make recommendations for corrective and supplementary legislation.


———. House of Representatives. H. R. 2893. *A bill to extend and improve the old-age and survivors insurance system, to add protection against disability, and for other purposes.* Introduced by Mr. Doughton. February 21, 1949. 143 pp.

The Administration proposals for amending the Social Security Act.


The hearings on these bills, which will shortly be available in full and have been reported at some length in the press, are valuable source material indicating trends of thought on this legislation.


A detailed statement of the need of this group for coverage.


The proposed methods of collecting taxes discussed are the book-return system and the stamp system applied to agricultural and domestic workers and a self-reporting plan for the self-employed.

2. DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS


The policy declarations are those adopted by the membership at the 36th annual meeting in May, 1948. The committee report points out needs for improvement and dangers of over-expansion in social security. Its underlying philosophy is that "In general, through individual, voluntary group, and legislative action, we must seek to achieve a maximum of family security with a minimum of compulsion."


States the specific legislative provisions considered necessary to achieve extension and liberalization of the existing social insurance programs and the development of temporary and permanent disability insurance and health insurance.


Examines the differences between public assistance and social insurance and concludes that "From the standpoint of freedom, democratic values, and economic incentives, social insurance is greatly to be preferred wherever there is a choice. It is important that . . . it be made clear that public assistance is not a rival to the insurance method but a supple-
ment to it, performing the residual task that will always exist for a last-resort program that takes responsibility for meeting total need."


An analysis of the shortcomings of the social security system and of the reasons for them which deplores emphasis on relief and stresses "the importance of incentive in a framework of social security."

Economic Outlook (Department of Education and Research, Congress of Industrial Organizations, 718 Jackson Place, Washington 6), December, 1948. "Two-way drive for social security." Whole issue. 15 cents.

States the legislative and collective bargaining goals of the C.I.O.


Argues against the expansion of the social security system on the grounds that the real problem is the achievement of economic security through the maintenance of a fully productive economy and that the prospective costs of social insurance would be detrimental to this result.


A provocative discussion of basic issues in social security in the United States which is still timely.


A criticism of the Advisory Council's report on old-age and survivors' insurance by the former actuarial consultant of the Social Security Administration emphasizing the need for a broad national, non-discriminatory plan providing a floor of protection for all citizens based on presumptive, rather than actual, need and buttressed by private group and individual plans for meeting the hazards of old age and permanent disability.


A critical consideration of current discussion of relief versus social insurance which, on the basis of foreign experience and American background, makes a plea for the maintenance of an insurance program under which "the worker remains responsible for his own economic status."