

LETTER OF SUBMITTAL

The PRESIDENT,
The White House, Washington, D. C.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:

In your message of June 8, 1934, to the Congress you directed attention to certain fundamental objectives in the great task of reconstruction; an indistinguishable and essential aspect of the immediate task of recovery. You stated, in language that we cannot improve upon:

Our task of reconstruction does not require the creation of new and strange values. It is rather the finding of the way once more to known, but to some degree forgotten, ideals and values. If the means and details are in some instances, new, the objectives are as permanent as human nature.

Among our objectives I place the security of the men, women, and children of the Nation first.

This security for the individual and for the family concerns itself primarily with three factors. People want decent homes to live in; they want to locate them where they can engage in productive work; and they want some safeguard against misfortunes which cannot be wholly eliminated in this man-made world of ours:

Subsequent to this message, you created, by Executive order, this Committee on Economic Security to make recommendations to you on the third of the aspects of security which you outlined—that of safeguards: “against misfortunes which cannot be wholly eliminated in this man-made world of ours.”

In the brief time that has intervened, we have sought to analyze the hazards against which special measures of security are necessary, and have tried to bring to bear upon them the world experience with measures designed as safeguards against these hazards. We have analyzed all proposed safeguards of this kind which have received serious consideration in this country. On the basis of all these considerations, we have tried to formulate a program which will represent at least a substantial beginning toward the realization of the objective you presented.

We have had in our employ a small staff which included some of the outstanding experts in this field. This staff has prepared many valuable studies giving the factual background, summarizing American and foreign experience, presenting actuarial calculations, and making detailed suggestions for legislation and administration.

We have also had the assistance of the Technical Board on Economic Security, provided for in your Executive order, and composed of 20 people in the Government service, who have special interest and knowledge in some or all aspects of the problem you directed us to study. The Technical Board, functioning as a group, through subcommittees, and as individuals, has aided the staff and the Committee during the entire investigation. Many of the members have devoted much time to this work and have made very important contributions. Plus these, many other people in the Government service have unstintingly aided the Committee with special problems on which their advice and assistance has been sought.

The Advisory Council on Economic Security, appointed by you and constituted of citizens outside of the Government service, chosen

from employers, employees, and the general public, has assisted the Committee in weighing the proposals developed by the staff and the Technical Board, and in arriving at a judgment as to their practicability. All members of the Council were people who have important private responsibilities, and many of them also other public duties, but they took time to come to Washington on four separate occasions for meetings extending over several days.

In addition to the Council, this Committee found it advisable to create seven other advisory groups: A committee of actuarial consultants, a medical advisory board, a dental advisory committee, a hospital advisory committee, a public health advisory committee, a child welfare committee, and an advisory committee on employment and relief. All of these committees have contributed suggestions which have been incorporated in this report. The medical advisory board, the dental advisory committee, and the hospital advisory committee are still continuing their consideration of health insurance, but joined with the public health advisory committee in endorsement of the program for extended public health services which we recommend.

Finally, many hundreds of citizens and organizations in all parts of the country have contributed ideas and suggestions. Three hundred interested citizens, representing practically every State, at their own expense, attended the National Conference on Economic Security, held in Washington on November 14, which was productive of many very good suggestions.

The responsibility for the recommendations we offer is our own. As was inevitable in view of the wide differences of opinion which prevail regarding the best methods of providing protection against the hazards leading to destitution and dependency, we could not accept all of the advice and suggestions offered, but it was distinctly helpful to have all points of view presented and considered.

To all who assisted us or offered suggestions, we are deeply grateful.

In this report we briefly sketch the need for additional safeguards against "the major hazards and vicissitudes of life." We also present recommendations for making a beginning in the development of safeguards against these hazards, and with this report submit drafts of bills to give effect to these recommendations. We realize that some of the measures we recommend are experimental and, like nearly all pioneering legislation, will, in course of time, have to be extended and modified. They represent, however, our best judgment as to the steps which ought to be taken immediately toward the realization of what you termed in your recent message to the Congress "the ambition of the individual to obtain for him and his a proper security, a reasonable leisure, and a decent living throughout life."

Respectfully submitted.

FRANCES E. PERKINS,
Secretary of Labor (Chairman).

H. MORGENTHAU, Jr.,
Secretary of the Treasury.

HOMER CUMMINGS,
Attorney General.

H. A. WALLACE,
Secretary of Agriculture.

HARRY HOPKINS,
Federal Emergency Relief Administrator.