ering it) need not in itself increase (or decrease) the Federal budget, since in most programs a fixed amount of Federal funds is distributed Federal revenues are linked to the poverty line to some extent through the minimum standard deduction for income taxes The primary administrative effect of changing the poverty line (if administrative guidelines were to be similarly changed) is not necessarily a question of *how much* Federal money will be appropriate for the poor as of *which* low-income persons or areas will receive the appropriated funds

8 With respect to Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, other elements of the distribution formula, such as the individual States' per-pupil expenditure rates, the size of their AFDC populations, the "hold harmless" provision, and the failure to update the count of children in poverty between the decennial Censuses, also have a significant effect on the proportionate share of funds which each State receives If the funds were distributed solely on the basis of the number of poor children, the distributional effects would be much sharper than those produced by any reasonable change in the poverty thresholds using the current formula of allocation of Title I funds

This report does not recommend any particular changes in poverty measurement or concept It shows that there are many alternatives possible, each with its own advantages and disadvantages Unfortunately, many of the more conceptually desirable changes are among the most difficult to implement There are options that would increase the poverty count; there are equally valid changes that would reduce it It can be concluded that any poverty definition may be subject to valid criticism, and that any definition is inherently value laden Nevertheless, there is an advantage in the continued publication of an official statistical series of a poverty measure as an index of national achievement in reducing the extent of poverty

Social Security Abroad

Housewives and Pensions Foreign Experience*

In Canada and in several countries in Western Europe, legislative efforts have recently been directed toward those elements of society that have been disadvantaged from the standpoint of social security benefits and have often required some form of financial assistance Though the groups thus affected include the self-employed, small businessmen, casual workers, marginal members of the labor force, and those who may never have worked at all, the largest such category consists of housewives Studies undertaken in the Federal Republic of Germany and Great Britain tend to bear out the fact that women earn lower wages, have fewer years of contributions, and therefore receive lower benefits than do men Program changes affecting women, however, have usually been incidental to other legislative reforms aimed at assisting low-income earners

Traditionally, housewives have been regarded as dependents and, as such, their entitlement to certain social security benefits has been derived largely from the insured status of their husbands Increasing participation by women—particularly married women—in the labor force has caused this view to undergo change Industrialized countries are now placing more emphasis on the social security entitlement of women in their own right and on the removal of penalities imposed upon them for withdrawal from the labor force because of family responsibilities

The new methods being followed and new directions being considered in nine Western European countries and Canada to initiate and improve social security protection for housewives and members of related groups are examined here The focus is mainly on the treatment of nonworking married women, but a look is also taken at the status of nonworkers in general, working wives, and mothers

In studying the various laws and proposals to provide equal treatment and independent status for housewives and women who spend part of their lives outside the labor force, six main approaches used in these countries emerge These approaches, which vary according to the type of social security coverage already existing in the country and the objectives being pursued to make women more self-sufficient, are discussed here in turn

(1) The traditional system, under which wives become eligible for a dependency benefit based on the earnings-related pension of their husbands (Belgium, France, Great Britain, and Switzerland),

* Prepared by Robert W Weise, Jr, Comparative Studies Staff, Office of Research and Statistics

(2) the universal system, under which uniform benefits are awarded to all men and women who have reached the retirement age (Canada, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden),

(3) options for voluntary contributions by working women under compulsory wage-related systems (Great Britain and the Federal Republic of Germany);

(4) voluntary contributions for the coverage of housewives (Belgium, Germany, Italy, and proposals in Canada),

(5) combining the retirement credits of husbands and wives or the splitting of such credits between them (Belgium, France, Switzerland, and proposals in Canada and Germany), and

(6) special retirement credits awarded to mothers on the basis of the number of children raised (Belgium, France, and proposals in Germany).

DEPENDENCY BENEFITS BASED ON HUSBANDS' CREDITS

The traditional and still most common method of providing old-age protection to nonworking housewives and married women who have failed to earn sufficient credits to qualify for social security benefits in their own right is by means of a dependent's benefit This benefit is based on the earnings record of the husband and is payable once he becomes eligible for retirement and his wife reaches the qualifying age In linking the benefit for a nonemployed woman to that of her husband, the law in most instances makes certain assumptions about such beneficiaries (1) that they have a stable marriage, (2) that there is a relatively small difference in their ages, (3) that they are in reasonably good health, and (4) that the husband qualifies for an adequate level of retirement benefits

In some countries—Switzerland and France, for example—a couple may be permitted to live apart without forfeiting the wife's entitlement to a dependency pension In general, however, the stability and continuity of the marriage is an important consideration under programs in which old-age protection is based on the insurance credits of one spouse Widowhood, divorce, desertion, or separation may make it more difficult for a woman to continue to be recognized as a dependent The protection accorded to nonworking housewives against the above contingencies, except perhaps for widowhood, under wage-related programs has often been limited and has given rise to demands in a number of countries that women be guaranteed social security protection equal with that of male wage earners

Most systems granting a dependency benefit provide it in the form of a supplement to or a percentage of the old-age and disability pensions of a husband supporting a wife This supplement is usually half (as in the United States) or more of the husband's basic pension, although in some countries it is less than half [1] Such benefits are awarded when the wife reaches a specific age (except in the Netherlands, where they have been payable at any age) The amount of the benefit is added to the husband's pension in some countries, in others, it may be paid separately to the wife In a few countries a supplement based on a wife's earnings record may also be paid to a dependent invalid husband

UNIFORM BENEFITS FOR WORKERS AND NONWORKERS

One way to furnish independent protection to women who do not receive wages for productive work is through universal coverage This approach provides old-age and disability pensions to all citizens or residents, at uniform rates, regardless of employment status or previous attachment to the labor force Such universal systems, currently used in Canada and several Scandinavian countries as a means of assuring a basic level of social security benefits, usually are supported by income taxes and general revenues [2] These systems eliminate many of the disparities between men and women that exist under wage-related social security systems, particularly the concept of dependency as usually applied to a marriage partner who has not been a salaried employee

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[1] The supplement for a dependent wife is 50 percent of the husband's benefit in France and Switzerland, 40 percent in the Netherlands, and 25 percent in Belgium

[2] Most countries that have a universal benefit also have an earnings related supplement In Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Canada, this supplement does not provide for a derived retirement benefit to a dependent spouse See *Social Security Programs Throughout the World, 1975* (Research Report No 48), Office of Research and Statistics, 1976, page x

Under the universal programs in effect in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, a wife receives a flat-rate benefit in her own right and in her own name The amount of the pension is uniform for all citizens who have fulfilled the residence requirements and have reached retirement age

In Sweden the retirement age for men and women is now 65 Until July 1, 1976, it had been age 67

In Norway the qualifying age for both sexes is 67 For a married couple, the benefit awarded to each partner is reduced to about 75 percent of that awarded to a single person on the assumption that a husband and wife in retirement each require fewer resources for housing and maintenance than does a single retired person For those beneficiaries (including nonworking wives) not entitled to an earnings-related supplement, the pension is gradually increased until it reaches 130 percent of its initial level[3]

In Denmark, the qualifying retirement age is 67 for men and 62 for women Each spouse receives 75 percent of the universal pension for a single person

In Canada a universal old-age security benefit is payable at a uniform rate to all persons aged 65 or older who fulfill certain residence requirements A husband and wife each receive the same benefit payable to any single person—$132 90 a month as of January 1976[4] In addition, a means-tested supplement of as much as $82 78 a month is available to every aged individual, including married persons

Recent legislation also makes it possible for a retired person's spouse, aged 60–64, to receive up to $215 68 a month, subject to a means test The purpose of the latter provision is to enable an aged person of limited means to retire by ensuring that his somewhat younger spouse will also be eligible for a benefit

VOLUNTARY OPTIONS UNDER COMPULSORY SYSTEMS

Some countries with compulsory systems for all employed persons permit those who drop out of employment for an indefinite period to contribute voluntarily while outside the work force The voluntary contribution enables insured persons, including housewives, to continue coverage One of the systems containing this option for women is that of Great Britain

Great Britain—Under the current social security program of Great Britain, anyone earning more than a minimum weekly wage (currently £13)[5] must make the standard earnings-related contribution (currently 5 5 percent) and may draw a full pension in his or her own right at age 60 (for women) or 65 (for men) If the earnings record is deficient for a given year, an individual may supplement these credits with voluntary contributions in order to safeguard the full range of benefits[6] Employed persons earning less than the minimum weekly wage also may make contributions on a voluntary basis, but this step qualifies them only for a reduced range of benefits A married working woman may elect to contribute at a lower earnings-related rate (currently 2 percent) and thereby also qualify for a reduced range of benefits In this case, however, she is not permitted to supplement her earnings record with voluntary contributions

Before legislative changes enacted between 1973 and 1975, married working women could choose either to make contributions, which entitled them to insurance in their own right, or to obtain maternity, retirement, and survivors protection on the basis of their husbands' credits By opting for dependents' coverage, women qualified for a smaller range of benefits than they would have received by choosing to participate In addition, they also had to forgo their right to cash sickness, unemployment, and invalidity benefits Nevertheless, a large majority of British working women elected not to be covered in their own right In 1975, of some 5 million married working women covered by national insurance, fewer than 1 2 million chose to maintain independent coverage

Another provision that has tended to discourage married working women from continuing their

[3] In Sweden the target increase for the single universal pension not supplemented by an earnings related benefit is 145 percent

[4] One Canadian dollar equaled $0 9775 in U S currency, as of June 30, 1976

[5] One British pound equaled $1 79 in U S currency, as of June 30, 1976

[6] A full range of benefits includes old-age, invalidity, survivors, medical, cash sickness, maternity, work injury, and unemployment benefits A reduced range of benefits provides only limited old-age, maternity, medical, and survivors benefits

affiliation with the compulsory system is the requirement that, in order to qualify for retirement benefits in their own right, they must contribute during at least half the years from the date of their marriage to age 60 This regulation, called the "half-test," means that, under certain circumstances, such women have had to earn or have credited more qualifying years than were required of single working women The law now provides that this requirement will be discontinued after April 1979

Until recently, British women also enjoyed certain program advantages over men Flat-rate contributions were lower for women than for men, and women could retire at age 60 rather than 65 [7] A married woman who dropped out of employment was also able to make voluntary contributions as a nonemployed person and thereby keep her insurance record intact Though this last provision was intended to enable women who left the labor force to preserve their pension rights, relatively few women chose to maintain their coverage through this means In 1975, only 200,000 married women were making voluntary contributions

The large number of working women remaining outside the compulsory system and a substantial increase in the number of pensioners—especially married couples and widows, who depend upon means-tested benefits to supplement their retirement income—became growing concerns to British officials during recent years To halt the trend toward income supplementation for retirees and to increase the participation of women in the national insurance program, the Government in 1973 eliminated for women the choice between independent insurance and coverage as dependents All married working women were placed under the compulsory system and, at the same time, voluntary adherence to that system was limited to wage earners whose contributions fell short of the required minimum of 50 weeks a year or whose earnings were less than £13 a week Voluntary contributions have been eliminated for persons, including housewives, with a very limited attachment to the labor force

[7] Before 1975, the British system had both a flat-rate and a graduated component for contributions and benefits For the graduated old-age pension, the contribution rate for women was higher than that for men Because of their lower earnings, however, less than one-fourth of the women pensioners receive a graduated benefit

In 1975 the Government inaugurated an earnings-related system that places men and women on an equal footing The new legislation calls for the establishment by April 1978 of an earnings-related pension based on the highest 20 years of credits Women will receive the same benefits as men, provided their earnings are the same, and they will also make the same earnings-related contributions To improve the coverage of married women, the legislation preserves the pension contributions of women even if their work record is interrupted for several years while they are raising children or caring for elderly or sick relatives If a woman remains at home to bring up children, she can still earn a full pension if her lifetime contributions total at least 20 years

The option enabling married women to make lower contributions is being phased out Married women and widows who by 1978 have already chosen to make reduced-rate contributions will be able, however, to continue to contribute at the reduced rate The retirement ages for men and women remain at 65 and 60, respectively

Federal Republic of Germany—The retirement pension entitlement of a married woman in Germany is based on her own taxable earnings and such voluntary contributions as she may make during periods of nonemployment No dependency benefit is provided A special provision was recently enacted to permit housewives without any earlier affiliation with a compulsory system to acquire pension coverage

Under current legislation, women in Germany are eligible for early retirement at age 60 provided they have 15 years of earnings credits, 10 of which were accrued during the 20 years preceding retirement The normal retirement age, which until 1973 was 65, is now 63 A woman taking advantage of the early-retirement option is required to give up substantial gainful employment

Before 1973, all persons who had been covered compulsorily for at least 5 of the 10 years preceding the interruption of employment were allowed to make voluntary contributions An insured person of either sex could choose the level of contributions, and latitude was given regarding periods of nonpayment and retroactive payment of contributions

Despite these ostensibly liberal provisions, participation in the voluntary program was limited—a reflection of the fact that working women found several provisions in the law difficult to fulfill First of all, a person who elected voluntary coverage had to pay both the employer and the employee portions of the contribution As a consequence, a nonemployed woman usually elected to make the minimum contribution permitted under the voluntary system, a choice that reduced her ultimate retirement benefit considerably A second difficulty was that voluntary contributions, unlike compulsory contributions, were not indexed for adjustment to national average wage changes A third deterrent was the requirement that a woman who decided to make contributions voluntarily during periods when she was not employed (to fulfill the minimum 15-year qualifying period by combining voluntary and regular contributions) could not become eligible for retirement at age 60 as under the compulsory system but was required to wait until age 65 to receive her pension

Those who benefited most from the voluntary option were usually women who lacked a few months to a few years of contributions to meet the 15-year insured-coverage requirement Conversely, those requiring longer periods of voluntary contributions in order to qualify usually found this option less attractive As a consequence, many women either never qualified for a pension or received only a small retirement benefit

To remedy this situation and to provide greater security for housewives who had never qualified for pensions in their own right, the Government in 1972 enacted legislation designed to extend voluntary pension coverage to all nonemployed women and to wives and other family members working as nonsalaried "helpers" in a family enterprise

VOLUNTARY INSURANCE SYSTEMS

Several European countries—Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, and Italy—have recently introduced voluntary pension programs for housewives, and Canada also has such a plan under consideration (In addition, a 1975 change in France, discussed later, permits certain mothers to affiliate voluntarily with the old-age pension program)

Under a compulsory system, as noted in the previous section, a woman can qualify for a retirement pension only if she meets certain minimum requirements, which usually include a long period of covered employment By contrast, voluntary programs give housewives wider latitude, in general, to combine periods of covered employment with voluntary contributions and, in some cases, may even permit them to qualify for a retirement pension exclusively through voluntary contributions Although the resulting benefit is usually less than a full pension, it does enable housewives to earn a minimum benefit in their own right

Federal Republic of Germany—The voluntary coverage of housewives was introduced in Germany in its social security reform law of 1972 Although the German social security system provides no supplemental retirement benefit for the nonworking dependent spouse of an insured person, it has maintained a relatively high earnings-replacement rate for single pensions, which in the past was considered adequate for married couples[8] German social planners, therefore, were less concerned with improving the earnings-replacement rate of the single pension than with raising the level of women's pensions, which, for working women, had fallen below the national average because of their low earnings It was felt that a woman would have a greater opportunity under a voluntary insurance program to build up a social security account of her own and to obtain adequate protection in case of separation, divorce, or desertion

The 1972 legislation enables housewives who have never worked to qualify for pension benefits in their own right through voluntary contributions Such women are subject to the same regulations as compulsorily insured persons, although the latter enjoy more liberal provisions with regard to credit for periods in which they are prevented from making contributions (training, illness, or unemployment) To enable housewives of limited means to participate in the retirement program, the law allows them to choose the

[8] The replacement rate is 60 percent of preretirement earnings after 40 years of coverage (1 5 percent of adjusted earnings for each year of insured coverage during the insured person's entire working life)

amount and frequency of their contributions, which of course determines the relative size of the resulting benefit

Housewives approaching retirement age, as well as those with insufficient employment coverage and those who had had their contributions refunded when they married, were able to accumulate the 15-year minimum qualifying period by means of a provision permitting them to make retroactive contributions back to January 1956 (when the previous voluntary insurance program ended) [9]

In general, housewives still have to reach age 65 in order to qualify for an old-age pension The possibility of opting for such benefits at the normal retirement age (63 under the 1972 amendments) or at age 60 is open only to women with long work careers and compulsory contributions right up to the time of retirement Women who become disabled, however, may qualify for a pension with a minimum of 5 years of contributions A 10-percent supplement is added for each dependent child under age 18 (or up to age 25 if engaged in academic or vocational education)

A housewife qualifying for a pension is either covered automatically for sickness benefits under the statutory health insurance system or receives a supplement (80 deutsche marks [10] a month in 1973) for private health insurance, if her pension entitlement is not based solely on contributions paid retroactively

Italy—This country was one of the first to introduce an all-voluntary pension program for housewives The Italian social security legislation does not provide dependency benefits for wives, although such women are eligible for means-tested benefits under the family allowance program A wife who has not earned a retirement pension in her own right must therefore rely on the single old-age pension benefit received by her husband plus a possible means-tested supplement It was to cover that deficiency that the Italian Government in 1963 introduced a voluntary pension for housewives

This insurance, which did not become effective until 1967, has been limited to women who were engaged exclusively in domestic work at home and who are not registered under any compulsory insurance program Contributions are scaled in accordance with the amount of the pension desired The benefits offered are an old-age pension at age 65 [11] and an invalidity pension if the insured person is declared to be permanently disabled To qualify, a housewife must have been registered for 5 years or more and have made at least 120 contributions

During the past 9 years, fewer than 10,000 housewives have affiliated with this program The low rate of participation has been attributed to the voluntary character of the program, the lack of publicity, and to the feeling on the part of a number of women, partly as the result of improvements in the earnings-replacement rate under the compulsory system,[12] that the protection they now receive through the coverage of the family head is sufficient The introduction in 1969 of the "social pension," which provides retirement benefits to all persons aged 65 or older who have never been insured and who have no other sources of income or resources, also has discouraged the voluntary participation of housewives in a separate contributory program

Divorce provision in Belgium—A 1967 Belgian law enables a divorced woman to make voluntary social security contributions in order to ensure her right to a pension The pension amount is calculated by adding her own voluntary contributions to one-half of the husband's contributions during the years of their marriage Should she receive support from her ex-husband, the amount of these payments is deducted from her pension benefit

Proposed legislation in Canada—The voluntary approach to the coverage of housewives has also been studied in Canada with a view toward incorporating it in future legislation The pro-

[9] Working women also benefited from a provision in the 1972 law that raises, for pension calculation purposes, past earnings of low-income workers to 75 percent of the national average in those years in which they had earned less than the national average

[10] One deutsche mark equaled 39 U S cents, as of June 30, 1976

[11] This retirement age differs from that under the compulsory system, which provides that a woman may retire at age 55 with 15 years of contributions

[12] Legislation in 1969 provided for a gradual increase in the earnings-replacement rate of pensions under the compulsory system Since then, benefits for a single worker have increased from 65 percent to 80 percent of the highest average 3 years of earnings in the preceding 10 years, based on 40 years of service

posal suggests that a hypothetical wage could be established for the housewife's work at home, on the basis of which she could contribute to a retirement plan and thereby build up pension entitlement in her own right This approach would recognize work in the home as regular employment and provide a measure of independence to the housewife

Objections to the establishment of such a plan arise, however, from the burden it would place on a family with a single income (from which both the husband's and wife's contributions would be drawn) and the fact that it favors economically advantaged women who have their own financial resources A suggested alternative calls for the establishment of a separate voluntary retirement fund to which housewives could contribute Such an action would require an additional administrative structure and would pose problems with regard to the recording of contributions and the computation of benefits This proposal has been temporarily set aside in favor of a plan for the splitting of credits between husband and wife

COMBINING OR SPLITTING PENSION CREDITS

Several countries have sought to increase the pensions of married women by allowing husbands and wives under certain circumstances to combine earnings credits Other nations are studying the possibility of providing an independent pension for a dependent wife by splitting all social security credits earned by a married couple equally between the husband and wife In Belgium the principle of credit splitting has been used to protect a divorced woman

Combination of credits.—At present, Switzerland and France provide for combining the earnings credits of husbands and wives in determining social security retirement benefits The approaches being followed differ considerably

In Switzerland, under a 1972 law, a husband and wife may combine their credits in order to improve the level of their pension Normally, an old-age pension is payable to the husband at age 65 and a supplement amounting to 50 percent of his benefit is payable to his wife at age 60 or earlier in the event of disability The amount of the old-age pension for a couple is determined on the basis of the husband's average annual income, which, under the new law, includes any earnings by his wife, before and after marriage, on which she has made contributions If a married woman has retirement credits based on her own employment that call for a pension larger than 50 percent of that of her husband, her benefit is increased to equal the amount she would have received in her own right

These provisions of the Swiss law are limited, however, to a maximum cash ceiling for pensions established each year on the basis of an index Since the pension obtainable by combining the credits of a husband and wife cannot exceed this maximum, only couples with low income have been able to benefit from this provision of the law

In France, the law covering old-age and survivors pensions was amended in 1974 to improve and simplify the regulations affecting women One provision allows an insured woman to combine her own earned pension with a survivor benefit based on her husband's insurance credits The limit for such a combined pension is one-half the insured person's pension plus one-half the survivor benefit

Another approach to providing equal treatment for women now under consideration in a few countries involves the creation of an independent earnings record for each individual This objective would be achieved by combining the taxable earnings of a husband and wife and crediting each with 50 percent of the total In a family with a wage-earning husband and a dependent wife, the husband's credits would be split equally between them Such an approach is based on the idea that, since marriage is a partnership, each partner has the right not only to his share of partnership property but also to the share in the benefits earned by the partnership in the event that it is dissolved by death

Credit-splitting approach.—Although no nation has yet fully adopted the principle of credit splitting, it is nevertheless being studied by legislators and social planners in Canada and the Federal Republic of Germany It has the advantage of being applicable either in a husband-wife relationship or in the event of divorce Its purpose is to protect the future pension rights of nonemployed wives who may not have been insured in their own right during marriage

Retirement credits of either the husband or wife could be split, with half being credited to each partner, on three occasions (1) As the credits are earned, (2) in case of a marriage breakdown, or (3) at the time of retirement For all three sets of circumstances, use of credit splitting could have disadvantages and present certain administrative problems, especially if there have been several marriages or common-law partners Credit splitting could place single-earner families at a certain disadvantage, for example, by reducing the protection the family would have in the event of the disablement or death of the breadwinner This possibility could, of course, be eliminated by splitting pension credits only in the case of a marriage breakdown or divorce

Under present laws, pension credits usually remain with the husband and a divorced wife has no claim on them unless she was married for a required number of years If she enters the labor force following divorce or separation, she may then begin to accumulate her own pension credits, but the married years are lost to her in terms of building up income protection Splitting credits upon separation or divorce would provide for an automatic division of all earned pension credits, regardless of whether there had been only one wage earner or both partners had been employed

Credit splitting at retirement, on the other hand, could be disadvantageous to a married couple in cases where the husband has been the only wage earner and is substantially older than his wife Under such circumstances, the couple would receive only part of the retirement income generated by the husband's contributions, until the wife also reached the retirement age

In Belgium, the principle of credit splitting is applied in the case of a divorced woman Under a 1956 law, a woman aged 60 or over who has been separated from her husband and has not remarried has the right to half his single-person pension if she is neither employed nor receiving a retirement or invalidity pension in her own right, whether her husband has retired or not

SPECIAL CREDITS FOR MOTHERS

Several European countries, recognizing the effect disrupted work histories have had upon women's retirement benefits, have enacted legislation allowing a year or more of credit for each child raised or shortening the number of years a working mother needs to qualify for a retirement pension Both Belgium and France award special retirement credits to working women based on the number of children raised

In Belgium, under 1973 legislation, a woman who interrupts her employment to raise a child may now continue her coverage until the child is aged 3 (or 6 if handicapped), if she continues to make the employee contribution To qualify, the mother must have been covered without interruption for at least 12 months preceding the birth of the child

In France, a 1972 amendment to the old-age and survivors pension program provided that a mother who was insured under the general system and who had raised two or more children for at least 9 years before their 16th birthday was to be credited with an extra year of coverage for each child This provision was liberalized in January 1975 to allow credit for 2 years of social security coverage for each child starting with the first It applies to women who continue to work as well as to those who are obliged to give up their employment in order to care for children at home

Another law enacted in December 1975, which grants early retirement to French manual workers, credits working mothers with 2 years of coverage for each of the first three children raised, thus making it possible for women who are manual workers with three or more children to retire at age 60 with 24 rather than 30 years of service

The French law of January 1975 also provides for noncontributory retirement credits to nonworking mothers in low-income households and to low-income single working women with children The plan, which is administered under the family allowance program, enables a nonworking housewife who is eligible to receive either the means-tested "mother-at-home allowance" or the means-tested "single wage allowance" to be credited with old-age insurance coverage under the general system Contributions to the old-age retirement fund are drawn from the family allowance fund in amounts equivalent to the employee-employer contribution rate at the

(Continued on page 50)

TABLE M-6 —Disability insurance trust fund Status, 1957–76

[In thousands]

Period	Receipts			Expenditures				Assets at end of period		
	Net contribution income [3]	Reimbursements from general revenues [3]	Net interest [3]	Cash benefit payments [4]	Rehabilitation services for disabled	Transfers to railroad retirement account [5]	Net administrative expenses [6]	Invested in U S Government securities [7]	Cash balances [8]	Total assets
Fiscal year										
1957	$337 199		$1 363				$1 305	$325,363	$11 895	$337,258
1958	926,403		15 843	$168,420			12,112	1,054 458	44 515	1,098,973
1959	894 995		33 293	339 231			21,410	1,606,874	59,747	1 666 621
1960	987 079		46 910	528,304		−$26,831	31,922	2,100,862	66,352	2 167,214
1961	1 022 002		60 610	703 996		5,148	36,299	2 385,575	118,809	2 504 384
1962	1 020 856		67 752	1 011 376		11 030	63 927	2 406 137	100 532	2 506 670
1963	1 075 621		67 221	1,170 678		19,609	66 512	2,277,244	116,468	2 393 712
1964	1,143 161		65,152	1,251,207		19 139	67 691	2,138 509	125 478	2,263,987
1965	1 175,244		62 135	1 392 190		23 615	78 862	1,875 566	131 133	2 006,699
1966	1 556,552		53 877	1 721 133	$1 493	24 962	183,479	1,462 628	223 532	1 686 161
1967	2 249 397	$16 000	66,840	1 860,789	6,534	30 634	98 834	1 832,627	188 978	2,021,606
1968	2 699,368	16,000	84 913	2 068 352	15 393	20 410	112 336	2,349,683	235,713	2 585 396
1969	3 532 434	32,000	140 860	2 443 437	14 891	21,328	133,495	3,490 762	186,778	3 677 539
1970	4 141 358	16 000	222 762	2 778,118	16 487	10,439	149 020	4 833,225	270,372	5 103 596
1971	4,569 470	16 000	325 068	3 381,448	21,242	13,240	189 875	6 076 203	332 126	6 408,329
1972	4 852,996	50 000	388 233	4 045 895	27,523	24 190	211,671	7,010 202	380,076	7 390 277
1973	5 460 969	51 000	434 550	5 161,840	39 361	19,503	246 649	7,801,908	67,565	7 869 472
1974	6 234 425	52,000	481 800	6 158 569	49 670	22,327	154,266	8,192,613	60 252	8 252 865
1975	7 356,217	52 000	511 656	7,629,796	70,936	28,514	252,985	8,155,910	34,597	8,190,507
1975										
April	719 239		2 201	655,645	−2 306		22 091	7,997,712	35,837	8 033 549
May	626,220		5 049	680 187	7 970		24 233	7,924,772	27,657	7 952 429
June	725,997		236,328	663 851	9,217	28,514	22 665	8 155,910	34,597	8,190 507
July	533 045		505	720,694			30 684	7 918 291	54 389	7,972,680
August	596,888		9,399	783 485	1		16 251	7,765,770	13,459	7 779 229
September	749 744		3 155	870 248	−157 369		21,748	7,724,395	73,105	7 797 500
October	450 702		3 978	758 471			22,760	7 353,776	117,174	7,470,950
November	515 303		12 193	572 921	204 666		18,113	7 105,599	97,147	7,202,745
December	625 845	90,000	217,418	764,298	−3,627		20 984	7,353 726	627	7 354,353
1976										
January	588 452		569	777 124	16,979		21 132	7,136,615	−8,476	7 128,138
February	667,013		9 272	773 335	5,583		18 838	6,985,289	21,379	7 006 667
March	743,044		3 831	796 245	152		22 101	6,911,383	23,661	6 935 044
April	817 396		3,121	798,740	14,581		23,931	6,915,420	2 887	6,918,309

See table M-5 for pertinent footnotes

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(Continued from page 44)

minimum-wage level Eligible to receive such retirement credits are women who have at least one child under age 3 or four or more children under age 20 and whose disposable resources do not exceed a maximum amount according to an index based on the minimum wage

A further change introduced in France in January 1975 makes it possible for the first time for a noncompulsorily insured woman who remains at home to care for at least one child to affiliate voluntarily with the old-age pension program To participate, mothers must make contributions equal to the combined employer-employee tax at the minimum-wage level

France has also sought to increase women's eligibility for retirement benefits by lowering the qualifying period for pensions from 15 years to a minimum of one-fourth of a year's coverage This change, introduced in January 1975, will benefit mothers and other women who have worked for less than 15 years and who otherwise would have received only a very small benefit or a lump-sum grant

A proposal to give 1 year of pension credit to working women for each child raised was debated in the Federal Republic of Germany in connection with the 1972 pension reform law Although the proposal failed to be adopted because of objections as to cost, it continues to receive consideration in the legislature