

NEVER AGAIN!



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BY JOSEPH STAROBIN

AN AMERICAN PLAN

"Countries all over the world, large and small—Great Britain, Venezuela, Uruguay, and our neighbors, Canada and Mexico—have improved their social security legislation, even during the war. Is the United States to lag behind other nations? We should have started long ago to expand, extend and improve our social security program. We must move forward now before it is too late.

With full employment and full production, we can have a complete and adequate social security system at a modest cost.

If we do not achieve full employment, it is all the more imperative that we have a complete and adequate social security program.

The plan embodied in this bill is an American plan—geared to the wage scales and standards of living of the individual families in various sections of the country. The plan provides for a practical program within our ability to pay.

The program is a practical one in a much higher sense. Our democracy could provide no better bulwark against the troubled times which may be ahead than to develop this dignified, all-embracing plan for social security upon which each family can build its own future by its own efforts."

—Senator Robert F. Wagner.

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IT HAPPENED IN PENNSYLVANIA!

MAYBE you saw the story in your local newspaper or heard about it on the radio recently—I mean the story of what happened in Force, Pennsylvania.

It's just a little mining town, like the neighboring Ferndale, or Hollywood, and you might not pause to notice it as you pass down the big concrete highway which cost about a million dollars to build.

But in that town, in August, 1945, a strange thing happened. A doctor named Elizabeth Hayes, 33 years old, organized the coal miners of the Shawmut Mining Co. . . . and they staged a stoppage for the sake of health.

Health, did you say? A strange thing to strike about. Not wages, not hours, not a contract either. Just health.

The miners of this village were sick and tired of the sewage overflowing the roadways, and seeping into the water wells of Force, Pennsylvania.

"We're living back in some other era, not 1945," said Tony Coccimigli, one of the miners' leaders. And the doctor in that town, pretty Elizabeth Hayes, agreed.

She's the only doctor in an area where 4,000 Americans live. And she knew that the people were just being poisoned slowly by bad water supplies. And the company, in its greed for profit, didn't want to lay pipes down to that mining village.

MEDICAL GAP IS NOT UNUSUAL

"An economic impossibility," said Frank Lambert, the general manager of the Shawmut mines. And he blamed it all on the doctor, "Betty" Hayes, as they call her in Force, Pennsylvania, and they love her, too, for what she's tried to do, a brave American woman who respects her 4,000 fellow human beings around Force, Pennsylvania.

Now maybe this is an unusual case, this business of a rotten water supply. But the issue of health in the industrial areas of our country is a very real one. And the case of one doctor for 4,000 Americans is also nothing unusual.

The fact is that this powerful United States of America is suffering from very bad health conditions. It's suffering from a lack of doctors, a lack of medical services. It's suffering from a lack of hospitals.

Before we were in the war, January 1, 1940, in urban Pennsylvania there was only one public health nurse for every area of 2000-4000 population; while in the rural districts, only one for areas of 5000-9000 population.

Since then the situation has not improved, in many places has become worse.

And every day, this powerful United States of America is *losing money* because a man stays home from his job on account of sickness, because diseases that could be prevented are not discovered in time, because Americans grow old before their time and still have to keep working until they drop. A terrible economic waste is going on—not a hundred years ago but in 1945 as Tony Coccimiglio says.

THE ANSWER IS S. 1050

Is there anything that can be done about it? you will ask.

Is it possible that this country which produces more munitions than the rest of the world put together, which turns out airplanes that go 500 miles an hour with ease, this country with its bridges, its steel mills, its electronic devices—can't lick the problems of American poor health?

Two Senators from New York and Montana and a Congressman from Michigan have the answer. Robert F. Wagner, that great veteran of labor legislation; James E. Murray, who's also fighting for full employment and John D. Dingell have written a bill which is now before the Senate and the House. And it's the answer which American workingmen have been waiting for.

It's the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Social Security Bill, S. 1050, and it's got the backing of the CIO, the AFL, the leading social service workers, the best and most progressive doctors—and many organizations like the International Workers Order, are going down the line for it.

The Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill is what the late President Roosevelt had in mind when he wrote into his famous New Economic Bill of Rights:

“. . . the right to adequate medical care and the opportunity to achieve good health; the right to adequate protection from the economic fears of old age, sickness, accident and unemployment.”

Yes, the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill is part of the legacy which the late President Roosevelt left to this country. If he were alive, he would want it passed.

AMERICA'S HEALTH PROBLEMS

Let's take this problem of health.

Maybe you think we Americans are a healthy people. Maybe, when you watch those pictures of our flyers and our soldiers in the movies, you say to yourself: "What a fine looking, healthy group of men they are."

Yes, so they are. But what about the millions of men who were turned down at the draft boards?

The fact of the matter is that four and one-half million Americans were kept from serving their country because their country had not enabled them to pass the minimum standards of physical fitness.

Four and a half million men—or more than the number of our soldiers who licked the Nazis in Europe.

It is estimated further that, of the 22,000,000 men of military age, about eight or nine million are just not healthy enough to pass the army standards. That's more than a third of our manpower. That's equal to our entire army in Europe and the Pacific. Something to think about, isn't it?

Just to throw in a couple of more figures, and clinch the point:

Back in 1935, the Public Health Service discovered that about 23 million Americans—one out of every six—had some physical impairment or suffered from some chronic disease.

Back in 1940, the National Youth Administration made a study of 150,000 young men, and found the following:

Out of every 100

eight-five needed dental care—

twenty needed an eye-doctor in a hurry—
nineteen should have had their tonsils out—
twelve required special diets.

And if you think the situation was better out on the farms, where people are supposed to have all the milk and the bread and the sunshine they need, you are mistaken.

In 1940, the Farm Security Administration examined about 2,500 families in 17 different counties and came up with the astonishing fact that only one in a hundred persons was in "prime physical condition."

You can easily see what this means to the human beings involved—the constant dread of sickness, the constant loss of wages because of time lost in the shops and the mines, the constant fear that something will come along and make a major operation necessary.

NOT ENOUGH DOCTORS

And where does the average man get the money when sickness strikes? He's got to borrow from a sister-in-law . . . he's got to go into hock with a bank . . . he's lucky if he belongs to a fraternal society like the International Workers Order which gives him a certain amount of sick benefit insurance and provides him with medical care in some of the large cities.

Medical care did you say? The plain fact is that there just are not enough doctors and dentists in most parts of the country. The case of "Betty" Hayes in Force, Pennsylvania, having to worry about 4,000 miners' families is not the exception, but the rule.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

A scientific report was issued by the United Steelworkers of America-CIO, in August, 1945. It shows, according to President Philip Murray, in his preface, that real wage standards have declined 10 per cent during the war in the community of Braddock, Pa., where 41,000 persons live and where Andrew Carnegie founded his steel fortune. The Braddock report reveals that steelworkers' families live in substandard housing, lack medical and dental care and are forced to make up a weekly deficit of income as against

expenditures by combining earnings and taking boarders. As a result of such conditions, war bond redemptions are 26 per cent as against the 21 per cent national average. There are hundreds of Braddocks in Pennsylvania.

Mining and motor vehicle injuries and fatalities are high in Pennsylvania. In the Portage mine disaster of 1940, 63 were killed, while in 1928 in Mather, 195 miners paid toll with their lives. Studies establish the fact that in Pennsylvania "in the great majority of instances . . . a serious work accident deprives a necessitous family of its sole or chief support."

As one of the results of deplorable economic and social conditions due to low income, high taxes and inadequate medical and health care, in 1943 only four other states had a greater number of prison inmates. Poor health and inadequate health facilities, widespread in Pennsylvania, are typical of the American scene.

The shocking fact is that 40 per cent of all the counties in the powerful and prosperous United States of America have no registered hospitals in them. And there are 15 million Americans living in such counties.

A similar number don't have a public health service.

The greatest number of our doctors are concentrated in the big cities where they are all hanging out their shingles to attract the money which the middle and upper classes have to spend on medical care.

In New York City, there is one doctor for every 700 people. But in Mississippi three times that many people have to share the services of a single doctor.

In New York City there is one general hospital bed for 196 people. But in Mississippi 667 people have to use that single hospital bed. . . . And it should be remembered that today there are 60,000 doctors in the Army and they will be the last ones to be discharged when the war is over.

A PLAN FOR THE WORKERS

Well, the Senators have a plan. It's a simple plan to provide medical, dental and general health care for the American people.



For 130,000,000 AMERICANS

HEALTH MEDICAL & HOSPITAL CARE

JOB and MATERNITY AID
PENSIONS for WIDOWS & ORPHANS

SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR WAR VETS

\$950,000,000 FOR HOSPITALS, HEALTH CENTERS

S 1050

WAGNER · MURRAY · DINGELL BILL

WASHINGTON

FULL SPEED AHEAD

Gropper

It's a plan for the man who is sick, for the man who may get sick, for the doctor who's trying to make a living, for the nurse and for the girls who expect to take up nursing.

It's a plan for the worker, for the retailer who's trying to sell him food, for the employer who loses time and money when the worker stays home from the job.

Above all, it's a plan for the voter. Because, if every voter will let his Congressman and Senator know that the Murray-Wagner-Dingell Bill should be passed, the United States will have a law that can improve and solve a number one national problem—poor health.

HOW IT WORKS

The federal government would set up a National Social Insurance Fund to cover every man, woman and child in the United States.

Out of this Fund, a man could call up any doctor he wanted—if that doctor was registered with the service and the doctor would come to look him over in case of sickness. Instead of shelling out \$3 to \$5 or more for each doctor's visit, the man who was sick could draw on the national fund. The doctor would be paid through the fund for each visit.

If a man or woman had to go to the hospital, he or she would have up to sixty days of the best possible care. And if the plan works as it should, the hospital service would be extended to 120 days. Operations, medicines, X-rays and all that would be included.

And the same goes for a dentist, or an eye doctor or an ear doctor.

To make this possible, the federal government is prepared, under the terms of the bill, to lend \$950,000,000 to the various states, for the building of hospitals and starting public health services in all parts of the country.

GENERAL FEATURES OF BILL

But so far we have been talking only about health insurance. That is *only one* aspect of the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill. Be-

cause equally important are its proposals to extend and improve the entire social security system.

Before we examine its new feature—which is the health plan—we should get a good idea of all the other proposals.

First, the bill proposes to extend the coverage of the social security act to include at least 15,000,000 of the large body of American people now excluded from its benefits. Excepting railroad and government workers for whom Federal provision has already been made, "the bill covers all gainfully employed persons," as Senator Murray has noted. "This means that . . . the total program would be extended to salary and wage workers in agriculture, domestic service and non-profit organizations and to people in business for themselves on farms, in small business and in the professions. . . ."

Second, the idea is to lower the retirement age for women under the existing plan from 65 to 60. And to provide pensions from \$20 to a maximum of \$120 per month for aged men and women.

Third, to develop, provide a system of disability insurance. When a man or a woman can't work for awhile, but doesn't have to go to a hospital or lie in bed, he or she can get from \$5 to \$30 a week up to 26 weeks for themselves and their dependents, based on their wages while working.

Fourth, to improve the present system of unemployment insurance allowing benefits from \$5 to \$30 a week for 26 weeks to any worker who's out of a job through no fault of his own—including lockouts. And if the fund can stand it, these benefits will last 52 weeks.

Fifth, to give to the soldier or sailor in the armed forces a credit of \$160 for each month of service. That is to create his status as a worker and thus bring him under the social insurance plan. He and his wife and kids are not deprived of the benefits of the social security act just because he happened to be working for Uncle Sam these last years.

Sixth, to continue and strengthen the United States Employment Service and put it on a full federal basis. So that a man can go to the public employment office when he's out of a job . . . or a boss can go to this same office when he needs a worker.

Seventh, the Wagner-Murray-Dingell plan offers grants to the

various states to provide maternity care for women. They don't have to work until the last possible minute before giving birth and so they don't have to go back to a job—or to house work right after a baby is born. Six weeks before and six weeks after childbirth.

Eighth, the bill increases federal contributions for aid to needy persons, such as the blind, the crippled and young children, without any parents.

WHAT IT COSTS

And the whole thing can be done by boosting the present contributions from workers and employers to 4 per cent on wages up to \$3600 a year. That's quite a boost from the present figure, but you will agree that it's worth it. Yet, when you remember that the present social security system is supposed to go up to 2½ per cent anyway, by January 1, 1946, it will be seen that 1½ per cent more can do wonders for the great majority of our working people.

The Fund would be administered by the Social Security Board with a National Advisory Council appointed by the Surgeon-General to help it. And all funds would be invested in United States Government Bonds, the safest investment that can possibly be made today.

Well, that's the plan. If you are a steel worker in the Mahoning Valley, a coal miner in eastern Ohio, or western Pennsylvania, you can see at a glance what this plan would mean to you. It would give you more than the present system of unemployment insurance. It would take a load off your mind in case of an accident in the mill or mine, and that is happening every day of the week.

It would save you the money you are spending on patent medicines, and give you a chance to have a doctor for yourself, your wife or children in case of need.

It would give your son or brother in the armed forces a break in addition to what the GI Bill of Rights provides.

Unless you were a member of a fraternal society like the International Workers Order which economically provides life insurance protection and sick benefits, and unless you happened to be in the group of American people who earn annual incomes over \$5000,

you could not obtain the sick, disability, old age and other benefits provided in the bill.

REACTIONARIES OPPOSE BILL

Every miner knows the importance of such social insurance. Every miner remembers that the United Mine Workers proposed a deduction of ten cents a ton in the 1944 negotiations to provide for social security to be administered by the union. John L. Lewis dropped that demand very early in the negotiations. But under the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill—Uncle Sam would provide for these very things which the workers of Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia and Kentucky know they need.

But, of course, you never can satisfy everybody. There are powerful forces who oppose this bill. They are spending millions of dollars to defeat it. The reactionary leadership of the American Medical Association is opposed to it. And these leaders have gotten together with all sorts of pro-fascists like the Republican leader, Frank Gannett, to lobby the country against the bill.

PHONEY ARGUMENTS ANSWERED

Let's examine the most important arguments of the opposition.

Some people say that such a social insurance plan would place the average doctor in a position where the government would tell him how to run his profession, whom to visit and how much to charge. "Socialized medicine," they call it.

That's the bunk, BECAUSE—

Doctors would be free to register with the medical plan, or not to register, just like with the Workmen's Compensation. Doctors could refuse a patient if they wanted to, and a patient could refuse a doctor, and go to whichever doctor he chose. The plan would in no way lower professional standards. It would only provide the poor people with a way of paying for medical services which they cannot now afford. As a matter of fact, the average doctor is getting about \$3000 a year right now; it's only the \$15,000 class which are putting up a squawk. With the 60,000 doctors coming out of the Army, this plan would encourage many doctors to settle in the

smaller towns and the countryside, instead of crowding together and competing with each other in the big cities.

Some people say that a "political bureaucracy" would run this plan, and make everybody responsible to the government.

That's the bunk, BECAUSE—

The Social Security Board, which is now running unemployment insurance would continue to run this plan. And that's a non-partisan body which has never been accused of bureaucracy. No government agency would determine which doctor you go to, and which doctor would serve you. That's up to you and the doctor. The only thing is that a government agency would pay the bill, from the funds collected in the same way that the unemployment insurance is collected now. There would be no more red tape.

Some people say that social insurance should be handled by the states and private agencies, and raise the cry of "states rights."

That's the bunk, BECAUSE—

The Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill idea is to use the state machinery wherever possible, and to use all the existing insurance plans of private organizations, also, if they so desire. All that the bill will do is INTEGRATE existing plans into one national plan. The federal government will aid the states to build hospitals and improve their public health systems. The poorer states need such help. Only the government can give it.

Some people will tell you that a man can get more under the unemployment plan by *not* working than by working.

That's the bunk, BECAUSE—

Such people have not read the bill. It provides that a man should take a job where a job—meeting his standards and previous pay rates—is available. The compensation will never amount to what a worker can make while working. It will simply tide him over until he gets a job.

Some people will tell you that the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill costs too much money.

That's the bunk, BECAUSE—

The average cost of medical care today is about four billion dollars per year. The Senators' plan would cost about three billion. But instead of a small number of people getting adequate care for

four billion, a lot of people would get adequate care for less. Under the present unemployment insurance laws, the worker pays 1 per cent and the employer 1 per cent. But that's scheduled to rise to 2½ per cent by the beginning of 1946 anyway, if Congress abides by the basic social security laws. So for one and a half per cent more out of your payroll—matched by the boss—you can have medical insurance, disability and all the other benefits. Is it worth it to you? Just think of what it sets you back if your wife needs an appendicitis operation, or your child needs its tonsils out?

Some people—who don't have any arguments left—will say that the cost of administering this project will be too high, and they mention the figure of 20 per cent.

That's the bunk, BECAUSE—

The fact is that the cost of administering the unemployment insurance plans which the government now provides is only a few per cent. Most of the money you put into it you get out in the long run. The people who argue along the above lines are usually reactionary fraternal leaders and representatives of the commercial insurance companies, which are paying fat salaries to corporation executives and whose administrative costs are much higher than the government's. It's mainly the big companies who place their own narrow profit interest above the health of the nation, who are actively organizing against it.

No, the plain fact is that there are no sound arguments against the plan. The American people have been fighting in the four corners of this earth for the Four Freedoms . . . freedom from fear . . . freedom from want.

It's time they got some of these freedoms for themselves, freedom from fear of sickness and old age . . . freedom from want which deprives their children of security. And that's what the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill offers.

That's why you—the reader of this pamphlet—ought to be for it.

That's why you ought to bring this pamphlet to the attention of your fellow worker.

That's why you ought to let your Congressman know that you want this bill to become law—and in a **HURRY**.

ORGANIZED ACTION

Individual action for prompt passage of the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill is an important phase of the whole struggle for adequate social security which cannot be achieved fully by adoption of this single measure.

American postwar economy, to cushion the shocks of the reconversion period and of increasing unemployment, must be reinforced by the provision of jobs for all, and especially for the demobilized veterans of this war. This requires, also, swift passage of the Murray-Patman Full Employment Bill, the Senate Benefit Bill (S. 1274) for unemployed benefits up to \$25 a week for 26 weeks, the 65c Floor Wage amendment to the Fair Labor Standard Act, Permanent FEPC Bill, S. 101, and other related legislation.

Unless powerful mass organized action is rapidly developed, the fight for postwar security and stability will be weakened. The International Workers Order is a fraternal insurance society, combining 15 nationality group organizations, general lodges and lodges in the Negro communities. Its 180,000 members represent a substantial factor in the fight for social security. While providing its own members with life insurance protection, and sick benefit, including insurance at cost rates against disability and tuberculosis, the IWO since its establishment in 1930, has been a leading force in the organized struggle for unemployment insurance. This is especially so because the membership of the IWO is rooted in the trade union movement and the nationality group communities of America.

The IWO, along with other fraternal societies, the CIO, AFL, Railroad Brotherhoods, patriotic and veteran organizations, progressive medical societies and groups, have endorsed and support the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Social Security Bill, S. 1050, as one of the essential measures leading toward greater security for the American people.