

Social Security Board Urges Coverage For State and Local Employees

States must take the lead in bringing the benefits of the social security system to state employees, Arthur J. Altmeyer, chairman of the Social Security Board, declared in a letter sent to all governors and state employment security agencies.

Not only old age retirement pay and survivors' benefits may be assured state employees, but unemployment benefits also could be extended to other groups not covered, including state, city and federal employees. In his letter to state agencies, Mr. Altmeyer stresses recommendations for improvement of state unemployment legislation.

With 1945 legislative sessions slated before or during the reconversion period, Mr. Altmeyer urges that special efforts be made by the states to strengthen the social security system and provide a genuine first line of defense for workers, employers and the country at large in the difficult period ahead.

The social security head bases his recommendations partly on the report of the U.S. Senate's special committee on post-war economic policy and planning last June 23 favoring the bringing of new classes of workers under

state system "within the limits of administrative possibility." Both this committee and the George Committee which concurred in the report, believed attempts to supplement the state system of unemployment compensation should await possible liberalization steps by the states through their legislative assemblies.

"Among more important groups still not covered are employees of small firms, government employees, farm labor, domestics and workers for non-profit organizations," said Mr. Altmeyer, "Most of these groups—with single exceptions of federal employees—could be included by the states and should be covered by any state able to do so. Congress must authorize coverage of federals."

Old age retirement and survivors payments under the federal plan could supplement any possible state benefits, those interested in the program declare.

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—Franklin D. Roosevelt

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