



Senator Sam J. Ervin Says

WASHINGTON -- Congress returns to Capitol Hill this week with many of the issues of the first session still pending. These include: new farm legislation, postal reorganiza-

tion and reform, environmental quality control measures, electoral college reform, new revisions of the draft, anti-crime bills and several consumer protection proposals.

Carried over, too, are appropriation bills for foreign aid and the Departments of Labor and Health, Education and Welfare. Congress could not agree on final versions of either of these money bills at the first session.

House and Senate conferees on December 19 agreed to a \$2.5 billion foreign aid appropriation, but action was held up when the Senate objected to earmarking \$54.5 million in military assistance to finance a squadron of jet planes for Nationalist China. The \$21 billion Labor-HEW money bill became embroiled in an executive-legislative battle over the budget in late December. The President threatened a veto because he said the appropriation exceeded his money request. Congress did not press the matter further at that time. Thus, these money bills are now before the Congress again.

The major issue of the session is not likely to relate to these matters, but rather to the allocation of federal funds for the hundreds of programs that make up the budget. Congress imposed a \$192.9 billion ceiling on federal spending for the current fiscal year. The President is now wrestling with the problem of compiling a new budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1 which meets our national needs and, hopefully, will not exceed anticipated revenues.

The importance of the budget is that it not only funds services and programs of the

federal government, but it controls the tone of the economy. An inflated budget could wreak havoc with the economy in the months ahead because the nation is already experiencing a rising cost of living at an annual rate of about six per cent. On the other hand, just to keep existing federal services and programs going will call for more money than the current budget. Rising interest rates and the steady increase of the cost of existing programs will see to that. For these reasons, the President and Congress are faced with a potentially larger budget from these items alone.

It is unlikely, too, that Congress, which voted a tax reduction in 1969, will vote any major tax increases in 1970. Thus any realistic budget should be based upon anticipated revenues from existing sources.

As of this writing, the President has not finalized the new budget which must be approved by the Congress. It seems certain, however, that there will be more emphasis this year on "holding the line" on military, space, foreign aid and research and development spending than in former years. These are the areas that are most likely to get critical Congressional review. Even so, there will be a lot of give and take over federal spending at this session, and it is too early to predict just what the result will be when all sides have been heard.

Sign-Up Period Jan. 1 - March 31

Many senior citizens in Chowan County will have a second chance to enroll in Medicare's Supplementary Medical Insurance. The enrollment period will last from January 1 through March 31, 1970.

This second chance is for those who did not timely sign up for Medicare or who originally did not want the doctors' bill insurance. Only people 65 after September, 1966, have this second chance.

Persons who enroll during this period will not have Supplementary Medical Insurance until July 1, 1970. The regular premium is \$4.00 a month. This amount is increased 10 per cent for each 12 months that pass from the end of the first opportunity to enroll to March 31, 1970.

To sign up for the doctors' bill insurance, contact the social security branch office at 401 South Dyer Street in Elizabeth City, N. C. Office hours are from 8:45 A. M. until 5 P. M. Monday through Friday. The telephone number is 338-3931.

So. Security Questions-Answers

Q. Suppose I don't sign up in one of the three months before I'm 65. Can I sign up later?

A. Yes. You actually have seven months to enroll in Medicare—the three months before the month you reach 65, your birthday month, and the next three months. However, if you wait until the month you are 65 or the three following months, your protection under the doctor bill insurance part of Medicare will be delayed for one to three months.

Q. I purchased a farm in 1968 and since this is the first time I have ever farmed, I would like to know how I report my income.

A. As a farmer, you should report your farm income and expenses on a Schedule F and include this with your federal income tax return. Get these forms from the Internal Revenue Service.

Q. I am receiving social security benefits and will be 65 years old on July 7, 1970. When should I sign up for Medicare?


A. Since you're entitled to social security benefits, you'll

be automatically entitled to the hospital insurance part of Medicare beginning with the month of your 65th birthday. There's nothing you need to do to obtain this coverage. If you wish to be covered by medical insurance (the part that helps you pay your doctor bills), just complete and return the enrollment card that will be mailed to you shortly before your 65th birthday. You must mail or take this card to the social security office before the month of your 65th birthday in order to have this protection at the earliest possible time.

Q. I am receiving a student check from social security and plan to work during the summer vacation when I'm not attending school. How much can I earn and still get all of my benefit checks?

A. You can earn a total of \$1,680 for the year and still get all of your checks. If you should earn more than \$1,680 in 1970, you should report the amount of total earnings to the Social Security Administration.

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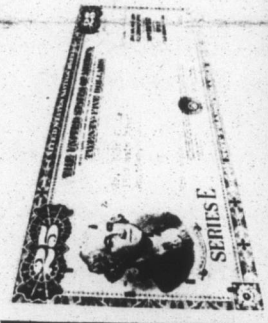
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