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by PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

Box 618. Alton, Illinois 62002
Phone: 618-462-5415

SOCIAL SECURITY PROBLEMS

Social Security is the target of a tug-of-war that pits fiscal reality against practical politics. The unpleasant facts of life are that Social Security taxes are not sufficient tp pay Social Security benefits, and the future prognosis is for the problem to get worse at an accelerating rate.

Last December, just before Christmas adjournment, Congress voted sizeable increases in Social Security taxes. When Congressmen returned to their districts, they found their constituents irate about the tax increases, even though they don't go into effect until 1979. Smarting under voter indignation, the House Ways and Means Connnittee voted by a one vote margin to roll back about half of the projected tax increase.

Meanwhile, the former chief actuary of the Social Security Administration, A. Haeworth Robertson, made a speech in which he charged that the tax increases voted last December are nowhere near enough to cover the anticipated deficits. He warned that Social Security taxes would have to doubla in order to pay the anticipated costs.

Mr. Robertson says that Social Security taxes paid by employees and employers will have to rise to 24 percent of each employee's salary. This, of course, is in addition to federal and state income taxes, sales taxes, and gasoline taxes.

Apparently believing this plan po iticalJ'unacceptable, Mr. Robertson suggested alternate methods of coping with the mounting Social Security deficits. He says that "the great American retirement dream," i.e., the expectation that one can terminate work years and begin leisure years at age 60 to 65, is sinking in a pool of red ink and must be completely revised.

He says that the recent bill to raise the mandatory retirement age from

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65 to 70 is only the first step in the direction our nation must take toward a national goal of presuming that every individual will engage in gainful employment suitable to his physical and mental condition till the end of his life, possibly in less strenuous or part-time jobs. The payment of Social Security benefits should be postponed until age 70, according to Mr. Robertson.

The cause of the problem is that Social Security is based on paying out benefits from current income, and the system doesn't operate successfully unless there are many times more workers paying in than retirees receiving benefits. The Social Security system does not hold and invest the money you pay in, but spends it immediately for other people's benefits.

The dramatic decline in the American birth rate is the reason why there will be fewer and fewer workers paying into the system, and whJ the problem will get worse in the future instead of better.

Although not mentioned by Mr. Robertson, .-\abortion is a major factor in the decline of the birth rate. Since the Supreme Court decision of January 22, 1973, some 1,200,000 **unborn.** babies have been killed every year. Abortions can't be stopped without the passage of a constitutional amendment to overturn the Court's decision or the appointment of new Supreme Court Justices who would agree with the strong dissents of Justices White and Rehnquist. But we can stop the use of taxpayers' money to encourage abortions.

State laws should require that a public record be kept of abortions and that the written consent of the mother be filed as a public record. If the pregnant girl is unmarried and under 18, the written consent-of her parents should be filed before the abortion can be performed. It is ridiculous that a minor girl must h_ye parental consent to ltve her ears pierced, but can have an abortion without such consent.

State laws should also regulate the abortionist, who is making money by killing future citizens. He should be forbidden to perform any abortion until the pregnant woman has had at least two days to consider the alternatives to abortion. He should be required to give the woman a written statement of how the abortion is performed and what are her medical risks, as well as of the alternatives to abortion and the addresses of agencies willing to care for her and her baby.