

fits for dependents of a retired or deceased worker are defined below:

*Fully insured*—credited with the required number of covered quarters (at least 1 quarter for each calendar year after 1950 or after the year age 21 is reached, if later) and before the year a woman reaches 62 or dies, a living man reaches 65, or a deceased man reached 65 or died

*Permanently insured*—fully insured for life, with at least 40 quarters of coverage or, if less, at least the

number needed for fully insured status at age 62 (women) or age 65 (men)

*Currently insured*—with at least 6 quarters in the 13-quarter period ending with December 31, 1965

*Transitionally insured*—with the same number of quarters as for fully insured status, except that the worker may be insured with fewer than 6 quarters (but a minimum of 3) if he reached age 72 before 1969

*Not insured*—with insufficient quarters of coverage to be fully, currently, or transitionally insured.

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## Notes and Brief Reports

### Railroad Retirement Supplemental Annuities Revised

On March 17, 1970, President Nixon signed Public Law 91-215, a measure that provides additional employer financing for the supplemental annuities under the Railroad Retirement Act. The annuities were established in 1966 to supplement the regular retirement benefits paid to long-service employees under the railroad retirement system. They are financed solely by employer contributions, unlike the regular benefits financed through taxes paid in equal amounts by employers and employees. A separate railroad retirement account handles the transactions of the program.

The supplemental annuities are payable at age 65 to railroad workers retiring with 25 or more years of railroad service and a current connection with the railroad industry. They range from \$45 a month for a 25-year annuitant to \$70 for one with 30 or more years of service.

Under the old law, the annuities—which are now payable to more than 60,000 retired railroad employees—were scheduled to end in October 1971. Employers were paying a tax of 2 cents per manhour of work performed. Because the supplemental account in the railroad retirement trust fund was depleted, legislative action was needed at this time.

Under the new law, the supplemental annuity program is made permanent and the employers are to pay whatever tax per manhour is needed to finance the annuities. The tax may eventually

rise to 11½ cents an hour, according to estimates.

After 1973, the railroad employee will forfeit his entire supplemental annuity unless he retires by the end of the month following the month in which he reaches age 65. During a transitional period lasting until the end of 1973, the age limit will gradually be reduced from age 68 to age 65. Thus employees who are age 68 before the end of 1970 must retire on or before January 1, 1971; those who reach age 67 in 1971 must retire by January 1, 1972, and so forth. If an employee has at least 23 years of railroad service but less than 25 when he reaches the age at which he must otherwise retire or forfeit his supplemental annuity, he may continue to work until he qualifies for the annuity, unless he is or becomes eligible for social security benefits.

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### Effect of OASDI Benefit Increases

March 1970 checks for those receiving monthly cash benefits under the old-age, survivors, disability, and health insurance program included for the first time the increases provided by the 1969 amendments to the Social Security Act.<sup>1</sup> The checks, delivered in the first week of April, were at least 15 percent higher than the amount payable under the old rates.

The total amount payable to the 25.7 million persons receiving benefits at the end of March was \$2.5 billion. It was about \$343 million more

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<sup>1</sup> The new rates were effective beginning with benefits for January 1970, and a separate check for the amount of the January and February increases was mailed to beneficiaries in the third week of April.