



THE
AuCoinREPORT

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Update: Social Security

August 18, 1982

Dear Friend:

On February 18, 1981, President Reagan said, "Those who through no fault of their own must depend on the rest of us...the disabled, the elderly...can rest assured that the social safety net of programs they depend on are exempt from any cuts."

But the Administration is in trouble because of its economic policy, and some top budget experts want to cut Social Security benefits, even to people already receiving them. The White House won't cut defense and has already cut Medicare and Medicaid, so Social Security is the only large entitlement left to cut, say many senior Administration officials.

This is a proposal I intend to fight. The government made a commitment to each worker who paid into the Social Security system. A commitment that must be kept. There's no doubt that the Social Security system is in trouble. But we don't have to cut current benefits to save it. It is unjust to balance the whole budget on the backs of senior citizens. My comments on the other side tell you more about the Administration's proposals and my stand on the issue.

With warm regards,

Sincerely,

LES AuCOIN
Member of Congress



United States
of America

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House of Representatives

AN ALL-OUT CAMPAIGN TO CUT ENTITLEMENTS

HON. LES AU COIN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 18, 1982

Mr. AU COIN. Mr. Speaker, a front page news story in the Washington Post shows the administration admitting that it intends to cut entitlement programs to support its runaway defense buildup and irresponsible tax cuts. According to the news story, a senior administration official promises "an all-out campaign to cut entitlements" next year.

The President is faced with a budget deficit the likes of which has never been seen before in this country. Yet, a 3-year tax cut is on the schedule, as are massive weapons expenditures. With all this money pouring out of the Treasury, now money has to be brought in. The administration is saying social security cuts are the way to do it.

But, Mr. Speaker, our Government has a longstanding commitment to workers who paid and are paying

social security taxes. The Government promised them they would receive certain benefits, and now the administration's budget experts want to break that promise.

There are other entitlement programs which have been cut—food stamps, housing assistance, medicare, and medicaid. But even this has not done the job of balancing our troubled budget.

Social security cuts to both current and future recipients have been proposed by administration officials even while the White House reaffirms its determination to build up the defense budget.

All this from the man who pushed a 3-year tax cut through Congress against the best judgment of most economists; the man who submitted a budget for 1983 with a deficit of \$160 billion and now calls for a constitutional amendment to balance the budget; the man who held a press conference to say he would do nothing to hurt current social security beneficiaries. According to President Reagan, all this was possible and there would still be enough left over to double defense spending.

Well, as so many of us feared, the President's economic package has hurt

our country. Our Nation is more than \$100 billion deeper in debt, our people are out of work, and our families can not afford housing. Now, instead of trimming the fat on defense spending, the administration chooses to assault our senior citizens, our disabled workers, our "truly needy."

Well, Mr. Speaker, this is not how America wants to balance the budget. It is in everyone's interest to preserve social security. It is in everyone's interest to be able to look forward to secure senior years. The social security system needs help, no one can deny it. But, it is unfair to punish those who depend on social security. We should not break the promise made by our Government to all those who contributed a portion of each paycheck to the social security system with the notion that if they were disabled or retired, they would receive the insurance they paid for.

That would be wrong. There are ways to shore up the social security system without affecting current beneficiaries or those almost set for retirement and I intend to fight to see that the social security system is saved in a way that keeps our promises to the senior citizens of the Nation, to whom we owe so much.

THE AuCoin REPORT

Les AuCoin

M.C.



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Official Business

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