

# Farm Bureau criticizes SS solution

PARK RIDGE, Ill. — The White House-endorsed plan for rescuing the Social Security system, "hits farmers doubly hard, without addressing the system's fundamental problem," American Farm Bureau Federation President Robert Delano said last Thursday.

"Under the bipartisan Social

Security Commission report, self-employed farmers will have to increase payments 43 percent to meet the combined rate levied on employers and employees," Delano said. "In addition, farmers with employees will have to pay the increase in Social Security taxes on themselves and their employees that has been ac-

celerated to next January."

Those two factors, the farm leader said, constitute a "double whammy" for a sector of the economy already reeling, in large part, because of government policies. "While the government is trying to redress its past mistakes by getting rid of surpluses and promoting farm exports, this latest tax increase will surely reduce net income for the nation's farmers and ranchers," Delano said.

Increasing Social Security taxes without significantly cutting the growth rate of benefits, Delano notes, "doesn't get at Social Security's basic problem: It is overly generous with benefits in relation to what's contributed into it." The newest plan, he asserted, "concentrates almost exclusively on increasing revenues, without

getting control of the program's cost."

In addition, the farm leader said, "The commission's solution doesn't deal with the fact that there has been a relatively shrinking pool of workers supporting an expanding group of retirees. In 1950, there were 16 workers paying for each retiree; today there are only three workers paying for each beneficiary, in 50 years, there will be only two."

That problem, Delano said, "seemingly is the wild card in all this, as the Commission failed to come up with what it said was needed to get Social Security through the next 75 years." Delano said it is "unthinkable that Congress consider more tax increases for a long-term solution instead of freezing benefits at current levels until basic defects in the law can be corrected."



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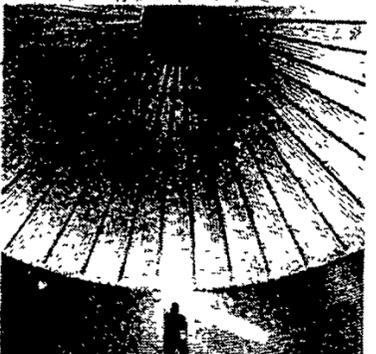
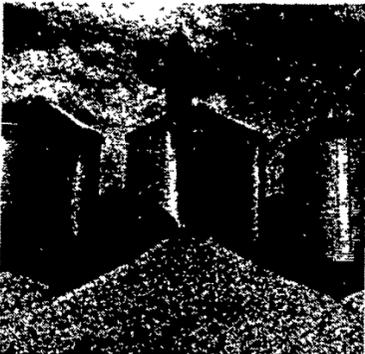
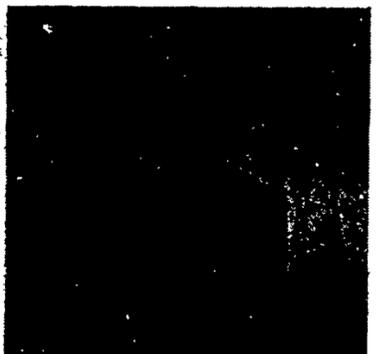
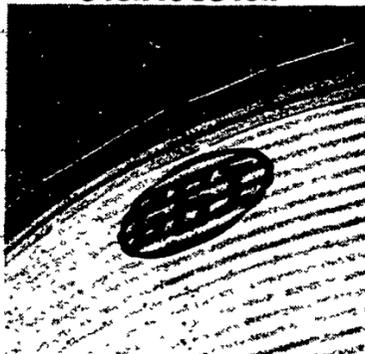
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