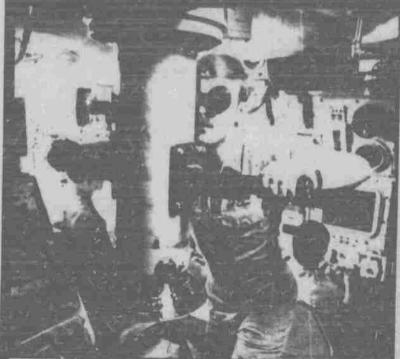


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# Social security: Hope for future

By GAH Y. HUEY

Two Lincoln social security officials and a UNL economics professor agreed Thursday that some form of social security should be available for today's young adults when they are ready to retire.
While it may be difficult to predict the future of

social security, it is too important for the federal government to let it go under, they said.

"There is no way it is going to collapse because of the people depending on it," Earl Flittner, opera-tions assistant for the social security office in Lincoln, said.

Social security is important in the lives of many Americans, it would be incredible to allow it to disappear, Professor George Rejda said.

Many Americans depend on social security as their only source of income, said Robert Gray, district manager for the social security administration. Nearly 36 million Americans now are receiving social security.

All three said the type of financing that people receive from social security will change over the years. Social security has never been static and changes year to year, Flittner said.

Just last year President Reagan signed several amendments to the Social Security Act. The purpose of the 1983 Social Security Amendments was to keep the retirement system financially sound for the next 75 years through a combination of steps: An acceleration of scheduled tax increases, a restraint on the growth of future benefits and an increase in the age to obtain full retirement benefits.

Last year, for the first time in 10 years, the federal government took in more money than it spent, Flittner said. The increase in the fund was partly the result of the new amendments and partly the result of the change in the social security formula, which determines the amount of benefits an individual receives, he said.

It is an encouraging sign to take in more money than what was spent, Flittner said.

Rejda said, the social security program appears to be stable for the next 75 years and should be around to pay benefits to young adults who retire in the future. However, the program probably will not be the same, he said.

Gray predicts that the present program will become a more generalized social program. Presently, the fund is paying for more benefits than its original intent, he said. The original purpose of the social security act was to provide insurance to workers and their families against lost income due to retirement, severe disability or death.

"There is no doubt in my mind that social security

is going to be here," Gray said.

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