

million, roughly 1.9 million—mainly State and local government employees—had not actually been brought under the program, but were eligible for OASDHI coverage under the special voluntary coverage provisions applying in certain employment areas. For the most part, the 5.5 million workers not covered in June 1967 were in one of two major categories: (1) Government workers—primarily Federal—who are covered under their own staff retirement system (about 2.5 million); and (2) persons who were irregularly employed at the time or had earnings that did not meet certain minimum requirements (about 3 million). The latter include many who will eventually qualify through additional earnings or as the wives of insured workers.

The above figures on OASDHI coverage include several million workers who are also covered under other governmental compulsory retirement systems. About three-quarters of a million workers are under the contributory railroad retirement system which is closely coordinated with the OASDHI system. About 3 million military personnel in the Armed Forces are covered by their own noncontributory system as well as by OASDHI. More than 6 million State and local government employees are covered by contributory staff retirement systems, of whom almost three-fourths are also covered by OASDHI.

Thus, today all but 4 percent of the people at work are earning public retirement protection for the future and many in this 4 percent will earn protection as they move to other jobs.

The nearly universal coverage of OASDHI assures workers that their protection will follow them whenever they shift to one job from another. Earnings with different employers and in different types of employment are combined and given full credit toward the computation of an individual's retirement benefits.

The impact of this continuous coverage and of complete portability of credits earned is reflected in the fact that 92 percent of the persons now turning age 65 are estimated to be eligible for monthly cash benefits under the program; and 95 percent of all children and their mothers can count on monthly survivors' insurance benefits if the family breadwinner dies.

Supplementing the coverage of the public retirement system are private retirement plans in industrial and nonprofit employment. At the beginning of 1967, about 26 million wage and salary workers, or over a third of those who were covered by OASDHI, were also covered by private pension or deferred profit-sharing plans designed to build on the Federal social insurance system and provide additional benefits.

Two other sources of income during old age are veterans' benefits and public assistance. For aged veterans with service-connected disabilities, compensation is paid without regard to other income or resources. For aged veterans with non-service-connected disabilities, pensions are payable under an income test. Public assistance is available under the various State laws for those aged needy persons who meet a means test. The 1963 Survey of the Aged shows that of the aged men receiving OASDHI benefits, 12 percent were also receiving veterans' benefits and 7 percent public assistance. Among women beneficiaries, the respective ratios were 5 and 8 percent.