

41 Message to the Congress Transmitting First Annual Report of Activities Under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970.

February 4, 1972

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with Section 214 of Public Law 91-646, I am transmitting today the first annual report of each Federal agency whose activities are governed, in part, by the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970.

The agency reports describe initial steps which have been taken under the Act to provide for the uniform and equitable treatment of persons displaced from homes, businesses or farms by Federal and federally assisted programs and to establish uniform and equitable real property acquisition policies for these programs. The reports cover the period January 2, 1971 through June 30, 1971.

To assure equitable treatment and essential uniformity in administering the law, I requested in a letter to Federal agencies, dated January 4, 1971, that a number of actions be taken. First, the Office of Management and Budget was asked to chair an interagency task force to develop guidelines for all agencies to follow in the issuance of regulations and procedures implementing the Uniform Relocation Assistance Act. The Departments of Justice, Transportation, Defense, and Housing and Urban Development, and the General Services Administration were requested to assist in this development. These guidelines were issued February 27, 1971, and supplemental instructions were issued on August 30, 1971. As noted in the attached reports, the agencies have now

promulgated regulations and procedures to implement the act pursuant to the guidelines.

Secondly, I requested Federal agencies administering mortgage insurance programs to determine whether guarantees could be given to individuals who were displaced and might otherwise be ineligible because of age, physical, or other conditions. Studies completed early in 1971 indicated that such guarantees could be made, and I am advised that these agencies are now fully implementing Section 203(b) of the Act.

Thirdly, I directed the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to develop criteria and procedures whereby all Federal and federally assisted programs could use the authority provided by Section 206(a) of the Act to construct replacement housing as a last resort. These criteria and procedures to assure uniform and equitable policies and practices by all agencies have been published in the Federal Register, and the Department is evaluating comments received for consideration in the preparation of final instructions on this subject.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development, pursuant to my request, is also developing criteria and procedures for implementing section 215 of the act. That section concerns loans for planning and other preliminary expenses necessary for securing federally insured mortgage financing for the rehabilitation or construction of housing for displaced

persons. These procedures and criteria should be issued shortly.

I also directed the Office of Management and Budget to form and to chair a Relocation Assistance Advisory Committee. This Committee includes representatives of the Departments of Agriculture; Defense; Health, Education, and Welfare; and Transportation; the General Services Administration; the Office of Economic Opportunity; and the United States Postal Service.

This Committee will continually review the Government's relocation program for the purpose of making recommendations to the Office of Management and Budget for improvements in the guidelines and for new legislation. In the interests of uniform and equitable administration of the law, it will also provide a vehicle for co-

ordinating the relocation programs of each of the agencies.

Executive branch review of the relocation assistance program and of the provisions of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 has disclosed a number of problem areas which require legislative consideration. The principal areas identified are detailed as enclosure 4 of this report, while other problem areas are identified in individual agency reports. Corrective legislation will be submitted to the Congress.

RICHARD NIXON

The White House,

February 4, 1972.

NOTE: The text of the message was released at Key Biscayne, Fla.