

36 Message to the Congress Transmitting Annual Report
of Activities Under the Uniform Relocation Assistance
and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970.
February 8, 1973

To the Congress of the United States:

I am transmitting today the second annual report of each executive department and agency on their activities during fiscal year 1972 under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970.

The reports describe the efforts within the Federal Government to provide for the uniform and equitable treatment of persons displaced from their homes, businesses, or farm operations by Federal and federally assisted programs and to establish fair and uniform policies for real property acquisition under these programs.

The reports give positive evidence that the objectives of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act are being achieved. While the limited experience under the Act has not permitted a comprehensive survey of its effect on the general public, the principal reporting agencies agree that most of the people displaced by Federally related activities were pleased with both their new relocation sites and their benefits. The agencies attributed this favorable reaction to the increase in relocation benefits

provided under the Act. Relocation payments during FY 1972 totaled more than \$109 million for both Federal and federally assisted programs and were paid to over 50,000 claimants.

Early in 1972 I was concerned that legislation implementing the Act had not yet been passed by the States, and that the Act was not being carried out as effectively as it should be. A number of actions were taken to improve this situation:

—On February 2, 1972, the Vice President wrote to each Governor and to the majority and minority leadership in each State's legislature to encourage the enactment of comprehensive implementing legislation.

—The Office of Management and Budget, in cooperation with the Council of State Governments and the National Governors' Conference, solicited the assistance of Federal agencies and State officials. Partly as a result, most States had apparent statutory authority to comply with the Act's provisions by July 1, 1972.

—The Office of Management and Budget also issued a new and more comprehensive set of guidelines for agencies' regulations on May 1, 1972.

—In addition, the Relocation Assistance Implementation Committee, formed pursuant to my memorandum of January 4, 1971, has undertaken a number of projects to increase uniformity and effectiveness in carrying out the law. For example, a pilot test is being conducted to develop standard application forms so that all displacees, regardless of the program that displaces them, may be able to follow uniform instructions when seeking benefits under the Act.

—As a further step toward uniform and equitable treatment of individuals affected

by Federal and federally assisted acquisition programs, the Office of Management and Budget has encouraged all concerned Federal agencies to conduct early audit programs to check progress. I understand that the General Accounting Office has also been engaged in a review of the implementation of the law. I appreciate this effort and I am confident that Federal agencies will continue to cooperate in making improvements in these programs.

RICHARD NIXON

The White House,
February 8, 1973.