

Resource 3**Excerpts from “Why Social Security?”**

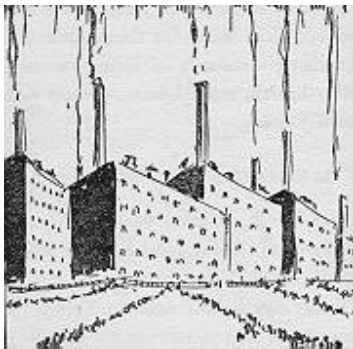
“Why Social Security?” was a 32-page Social Security Board booklet published in 1937 as part of the Board’s efforts to educate the American public about the rationale behind the new Social Security program.

Excerpt 1:

For the colonists a musket was a symbol of a home’s security

“For 250 years and more many American families, like the first colonists, measured their security in terms of the things they could make and do for themselves. As the frontier stretched westward, covered wagons carried with them the habits and ideals that had conquered the wilderness at Jamestown and Massachusetts Bay.

Now automobiles plunge in days over the trails that a scout on horseback or a wagon could travel only in months, and airplanes cross the continent in a single hop. The ways in which American families live have changed as swiftly as the ways in which they travel.”

Excerpt 2:

Today most families must buy, rather than make, their living

“As cities have grown up we have taken another series of steps for social security by banding together to pay for certain kinds of protection that no one family can provide for themselves. We have police and fire departments, for example. We make fire laws governing the kinds of buildings that people may build in safety to themselves and their neighbors. We support public-health departments. We set up traffic regulations to protect safety of life on the highways and streets.

We also have taken steps to aid helpless people who need a kind of care or an amount of protection that few families can provide for themselves. As our increasing scientific knowledge showed the need and the way, we built hospitals for the mentally sick and for people with tuberculosis. We made laws and opened clinics and special schools for crippled children.”

Source: Social Security Administration. (n.d.). Why Social Security? Retrieved from <http://www.ssa.gov/history/whybook.html>