

I.D. PLAN OPPOSED BY ADMINISTRATION

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Body

A Federal official said today that the Reagan **Administration** was vehemently **opposed** to a section of the Senate-approved immigration bill that requires the President to devise a system for verifying the identity of all job applicants, including United States citizens.

The system would be aimed at permitting employers to distinguish illegal aliens from citizens and aliens authorized to work in this country. Under the bill, an employer who knowingly hired illegal aliens would be subject to a civil fine of up to \$2,000 for each illegal alien. If there was a "pattern or practice" of violations, the employer could also be imprisoned for six months.

WASHINGTON, Aug. 25 - A Federal official said today that the Reagan **Administration** was vehemently **opposed** to a section of the Senate-approved immigration bill that requires the President to devise a system for verifying the identity of all job applicants, including United States citizens.

Annelise G. Anderson, associate director of the Office of Management and Budget, said that the **Administration** **opposed** the Senate bill's provision for an identification system. The bill says that within three years the President must "establish a secure system to determine employment eligibility in the United States."

"The legislation says the system can be used only for worker identification purposes," Mrs. Anderson said in an interview. "But the temptations to use it for other purposes in emergencies are extraordinary."

Uses by Police Are Feared

Despite the safeguards, she said, officials may be tempted to use the system to enforce draft registration laws, to combat drug trafficking, to quell a riot or to investigate airport bombings.

Mrs. Anderson said the establishment of an employment eligibility system and its misuse were "typical of totalitarian societies." "One of the things that a totalitarian society can't abide is not being able to control the movement of people," she said. "If you want to maintain a free society, you have to tolerate a little bit of slack in your ability to fully enforce the law. If you have everybody identified, you can stop people on the street to see if they have registered for the draft. If you have no **I.D.**, you have no way to find these people."

Senator Alan K. Simpson, Republican of Wyoming and the chief sponsor of the Senate bill, tried to take account of such arguments in his bill. He inserted provisions "to minimize the risk of undue invasion of privacy and the risk of Government abuse."

"There is no 'slippery slope' toward loss of liberties," Mr. Simpson said in the Senate, "only a long staircase where each step downward must be first tolerated by the American people and their leaders."

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House Has Similar Bill

The Senate passed the Simpson bill last week by a vote of 81 to 18. The House Judiciary Committee **plans** to take up a similar bill on Sept. 14. Supporters of the House bill hope to complete floor action before Oct. 8, the target date for adjournment. The House is not scheduled to convene again before Election Day, Nov. 2, but there has been talk of a lame-duck session after the Congressional elections.

The Senate and House bills both provide that for three years employers could rely on the best existing documents to check the eligibility of job applicants. The documents include passports, Social Security cards, birth certificates and drivers' licenses.

The "secure system" would be introduced after three years. The Senate bill says the system must be designed so it "will reliably determine that a person with the identity claimed by an employee or prospective employee is eligible to work, and that the employee or prospective employee is not claiming the identity of another individual."

It also says, "If the system requires an examination by an employer of any document, such document must be in a form which is resistant to counterfeiting and tampering."

Called Too Expensive

Mrs. Anderson said it would be "extraordinarily expensive" to devise a system to meet the rigorous requirements of the Senate bill, which authorizes \$10 million to begin developing it.

Mrs. Anderson said the total cost, spread over several years, might exceed \$1.5 billion. The basis for that figure, she said, is that there are more than 100 million people in the civilian labor force and the cost of producing each secure document, such as a passport, is about \$15.

Senator Simpson acknowledged that the costs could be substantial, but he said there were also "tremendous costs" to society from inadequate enforcement of the immigration laws.

Attorney General William French Smith said it was "inappropriate" for Congress to presume that particular changes would have to be made in the existing documents. Some changes may be necessary, he said, but "that remains to be assessed."

Cards Common in Europe

Identity cards have long been common in parts of Europe. France, West Germany, Belgium and Italy have such cards. In this country, Federal agencies and advisory committees have repeatedly studied the idea of a national identification system, and they have generally discouraged the idea.

The Social Security **Administration** said this month that in an effort to frustrate counterfeiters, it would start issuing Social Security cards on bank-note paper next year. Senate aides said they doubted that such cards could satisfy the Simpson bill's requirements for a secure system.

The Senate bill does not specify whether the President should use identification cards, a computerized data bank or some other device.

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