

DISABLED ... OR DISHONEST?

before checking on the claimants' disabilities.

One might think that OWCP would monitor those rolls aggressively. It doesn't happen. As Thomas F. McBride, until recently Inspector General at the Department of Labor, told me: "Once a person goes on the periodic roll, he just drops off the radar screen. He's forgotten."

After a decade of negligence and abuse, however, there is finally a note of encouragement for taxpayers. William Jacobs, director of OWCP, and Deputy Undersecretary of Labor Robert B. Collyer are putting federal workers' compensation back on track. They are drafting new regulations for OWCP district offices to bar from the program physicians whose fees are out of line with a prescribed schedule. And they have recommended to Congress that the penalty for filing a false claim be increased from a misdemeanor to a felony.

Still, administrative changes alone won't solve the program's ills. Legislative changes are necessary. To this end, the Reagan Administration proposed a reform of the

FECA that would (1) make sure injured employees can't earn more than what they were paid when working; (2) abolish the 45-day COP and require a seven-day waiting period before a person could apply for benefits; (3) give federal departments the right to appeal questionable compensation decisions; and (4) move beneficiaries who've reached retirement age from the long-term disability rolls to the civil-service retirement lists.

In June 1981, a similar bill passed the House but died in conference with the Senate. Meanwhile, a reform of the Longshoremen's Act passed the Senate but was not acted on by the House. Congress should breathe new life into the bills and, while at it, address a problem that the bills neglect: the need to provide incentives for rehabilitating injured employees. In a joint program, the Postal Service and the Department of Labor have managed to rehabilitate—and find new jobs for—1884 employees who had permanent job-related disabilities. Estimated savings: \$22.6 million a year. The job can be done. Congress should insist that it is.



Opening Lines

WHEN I PHONED a needlecraft store, the person who answered said, "Thank you for finding the Needle in the Haystack. Can I help you?"

—Contributed by Dorothy Dehr




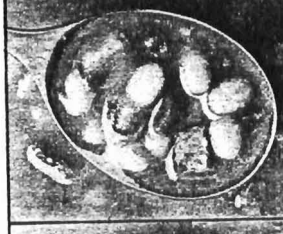




MY PHONE CALL to an exterminating company was answered with: "Good afternoon, Walton Pest Control. What's bugging you?"

—Contributed by E. M. Forsyth

P157 RD 3/83

# Which Soup for One® is the one for you?

(It's okay to check more than one.)

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|              |   |   |                                        |    |    |                        |                         |
| <b>Tomato Royale:</b><br>A distinctive zing of tomatoes in our sauce. <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Golden Chicken &amp; Noodles:</b> Chicken, noodles, carrot slivers homemade bone-marrowed broth. <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Old World Vegetable:</b> A dozen succulent vegetables topped with a hint of Parmesan cheese. <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>New England Clam Chowder:</b> Tender pieces of clams and potatoes in a creamy chowder base. <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Old Fashioned Bean with Ham &amp; Bacon:</b> Natural smoke flavoring enhances the robust taste. <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Burly Vegetable Beef:</b> Masterfully seasoned beef, vegetables and macaroni in rich beef stock. <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Savory Cream of Mushroom:</b> Slices of delicate mushrooms in a cream sauce. <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Full flavored Chicken Vegetable:</b> Tender chicken with vegetables and rice. <input type="checkbox"/> |



One delicious serving of one distinctive soup.