

b. Administrative Law

1. Old-Age Health Act.

(Promulgated on Aug. 17, 1982. Ch. 80.)

[Background]

Health and medical care for the aged has been improved in Japan with the establishment of various medical insurance acts and medical expense allowance schemes for the aged under the Old-Age Welfare Act which came into effect in 1973. Under these systems, all medical expenses of people over 69 years of age were paid, as a matter of principle, by the state, local public entities, and health insurance systems.

With the aging of the population, however, medical costs for the aged greatly increased. Coupled with the critical state of national finances, the government had to trim its fiscal expenditures in this field also. Against such a backdrop, the current act was introduced.

[Contents]

(1) Insurance enterprises as below shall be implemented for the purpose of preventing overall diseases and promoting physical health from the period of adulthood.

- i. Issuance of a health ID booklet.
- ii. Health education.
- iii. Health counselling.
- iv. Physical checkups.
- v. Physical training.
- vi. Visiting guidance.

(2) With regard to medicare for the aged, expenses shall be charged partially instead of being free. Anyone receiving medical treatment shall be charged a ¥400 monthly charge in the case of outpatients, and a ¥300 monthly charge in the case of inpatients.

[Comment]

There has been much criticism against the measures contained in the new act that the increase in medical costs for the aged, which is one of the most important social security services of the state to the nation, purely out of fiscal considerations, will eventually affect the social security administration as a whole.

By Prof. HIDETAKE SATO
MASANORI OKADA

2. Law of Property and Obligations

An Act amending the Temporary Measures Act concerning Subsidies for the Interest on Loans for Farmland Owners, etc. for the Construction of Rental Houses.

Proclaimed on Mar. 31, 1982. Ch. 19 (hereinafter called "Amendment Act" for short). The Act subject to amendment is the Temporary Measures Act concerning Subsidies for the Interest on Loans for Farmland Owners, etc. for the Construction of Rental Houses (Ch. 32 of 1971, hereinafter called "Farm Housing Act" for short).

When farmland owners in urban areas, where the housing dearth is more conspicuous, turn sizable areas of farmland into housing lots and construct rental homes with loans from private financial institutions such as Agricultural-Cooperatives, the government, under the Farm Housing Act, shall subsidize the interest to be paid to the financial institutions by the farmland owners for the construction of the rental houses. (See diagram in the following page).

During the 10 years since the enactment of the Act in 1971, 14,300 rental houses have been constructed in an area totaling 931.20 ha under the benefit of government subsidies for the interest which amounted to ¥19,270 billion. Measures were adopted