

a right which demands the tools and the materials to accomplish it. There is a right to be measured in terms of their inherent worth and their potential for progress and advancement. The fact that a complex of circumstances has made it impossible for them to exercise these rights and to exploit this potential does not detract one bit from the inviolability of the rights at stake.

The church recognizes its traditional responsibility in behalf of the poor. Within the format of all major religious faiths is the stated responsibility, freely shouldered by communicants of those faiths, to seek out the poor and the neglected in order that the works of justice and charity might be multiplied in their behalf. In all creeds, the serving of the needs of the poor is not an optional program but rather one that pertains to the essence of the creed involved. While it may be true that the dimensions of the problem have developed beyond man's prudent estimates and the dollar volume required to meet these needs has exceeded their private treasuries, the obligation of religious faiths to serve the cause of the poor has not been decreased nor can it be totally delegated.

It is our responsibility in this moment of great need to delineate the concepts of justice, charity, and equality of opportunity. Our consequent responsibility is to convert these concepts into workable programs and attainable goals, set forth before all mankind so that the privation, the misery, and the disconsolate experience of the poor may continue no longer. The church must maintain her affiliation with the poor so that they may be motivated and encouraged in their efforts to utilize the opportunities and the potentials which our new consciousness of poverty forces us to provide.

Major social developments in this, the latest of social and industrial revolutions, necessitate the realignment of the resources. No longer can we depend upon the generosity of individuals, religious organizations, civic or patriotic groups, to meet the total needs of the poor. Three major processes identified with this modern era make this impossible. Many families and individuals have so increased their mobility since World War II that most of them live in a very marginal manner. The traditional resources available to stable families are nonexistent with this large segment of our people who are continuously on the move. The immigration of millions of people into the industrial centers of the North and West have multiplied the incidence of dependency. With each degree of increasing dependency, a lower level of living in an urban center has resulted. Many people crowded into little space, with reduced employment opportunities, have produced widespread need. Thirdly, the fact of automation has had a widespread effect upon the employability of willing workers who bring only their hands as their tools to do the job. The ever-decreasing need for this type of workman has added a depth and a continuation to dependency that social and economic planners could hardly have foreseen a generation or two ago.

The proposal of our Federal Government to take a leadership role in dealing with the phenomenon of widespread poverty is therefore very much in order. We look to the governmental organizations, having the widest base of operation, to take an essential role in dealing with the circumstances which are themselves so widespread and so deep. Where the need for additional Federal programs is indicated, they have the support of the National Conference of Catholic Charities, with the traditional reminder that they shall succeed in proportion to the use they make of existing voluntary civic and religious programs in the total effort to solve the problem.

The National Conference of Catholic Charities approves the objectives of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. Through its several titles it addresses itself to the problems of the very young and of the unsettled youth of our day and in so doing offers to them the promise of better days. In providing programs for deprived children in social and educational situations through community action projects, this bill strikes a solid blow at the present inability of children to make maximum use of existing educational opportunities. It is the expressed intent of many of these proposals to prepare the future student to enrich his educational product by reason of greater interest, a keener appetite for knowledge and perseverance in study to the end.

In providing a job experience for presently unemployed youth and young adults, this bill proposes to eliminate what could be a disastrous attitude at the very threshold of their life's work experience. However, in analyzing the prospects of these programs for the unemployed youth and young adults, one is prompted to ask where these programs will lead. We are not able to conclude with any assurance that these job experiences will lead into a marketable