

percent on the dollar; in many States, ADC regulations require a father to abandon his family in order to obtain necessary benefits for his children; and the overall level of maintenance is most frequently scarcely above subsistence so that all energies are absorbed in the simple act of staying alive.

The basic solution lies in the adoption of an adequate plan for income maintenance. This idea, considered radical before the advent of the war on poverty, is now being proposed by people as politically divergent as Leon Keyserling, former economic aide to President Truman, and Professor Milton Friedman, Barry Goldwater's economic advisor. It has also been endorsed by the President's Committee on Technology, Automation and Economic Progress, hardly a group of radicals.

Given the diversity of plans under discussion, what they all have in common is the realization that a country as rich as the United States cannot tolerate the poverty that afflicts so many millions of people.

Their advantages are obvious. No family would be deprived of the means for the basic essentials necessary to survival. By becoming a matter of right, like social security, a program of income maintenance would enhance the dignity of individuals and eliminate much of the stigma of welfare. By replacing the present welfare system, such a program, by transferring the responsibility of the Federal Government, would release millions of dollars of local funds to the cities for use in coping with the problems facing local governments.

In the years of the farm crisis, the Federal Government did this for agriculture. In these years of urban crisis, we need a system that directs funds, not to the country at large, but to the points of greatest need, in short, to the large cities. The entire nation would benefit because the increased purchasing power available to the poor would be spent on goods and services, stimulating the economy and creating more jobs.

With one exception, plans within the current welfare structure for turning welfare recipients into wage-earners are essentially fruitless. Current figures show that of the 7.3 million on the welfare rolls only about 50,000 fathers are potentially capable of supporting themselves and their families. The remainder are blind, aged, handicapped, children or mothers with young children. While some of the latter might become sources of family support, the question remains whether they might not more usefully be encouraged to remain with their children.

The only reasonable *foci* for substantial change within the overall group are the 3.5 million dependent children of poverty-stricken parents. These are the ones who must, by every available device, be motivated and given the chance to break out of the cycle of poverty that has gripped their parents. They represent the only real possibility for substantially diminishing current welfare rolls under the present system. For the remainder, some system of income maintenance is essential to living in dignity and decency.

But to return to the subject at hand. Quite aside from the moral considerations that underlie the war on poverty, the eradication of poverty is essential to the welfare of the nation. Jobs are needed. Education is needed. Training and opportunity are needed. Health care is needed. And every available means must be utilized in obtaining them. The OEO, in concept and form, is central to the effort.

Those who oppose this year's amendments to the Economic Opportunity Act and, thereby to a continuation of the OEO in its present form are forced into a position where they must applaud the results while condemning the process. They would keep the programs, rename them, and obliterate the agency that conceived the programs and made them produce results.

Opponents of the OEO tell us the war on poverty is in need of major redirection. Their proposal is to dismantle the agency by scattering its components all over Washington. In large part, they are the same people who in 1964 voted to kill the original Economic Opportunity Act by recommitment, after first trying to cripple it with amendments; they are the same people who, in 1965, voted to recommit the poverty amendments.

Not only do they want to decapitate the OEO, but they also want to impose on the States half the cost of running such programs and the Neighborhood Youth Corps. Under 50-50 contributions which finally convinced us that Medicare was an absolute necessity if everyone were to be protected. The important thing is to come up with a formula that works. Experience has taught us that 50-50 funding is not the solution.