

Fifth, police and bad debt records frequently constitute a serious barrier to employment and better earnings for those who are genuinely motivated to improve their capabilities for self-support. According to a special analysis made by the Employment Service in late 1966, records of arrests, garnishments or similar troubles were identified as the major barrier to employment for about one out of every ten unemployed job applicants in slum areas.

Finally, the system in which programs are to be carried out may be imperfect. The criteria by which the performance of those who are actually carrying out programs is judged, may be quite different than that which should be used to judge the success or failure of a program. Misinformed though it is, the image which most people have of public welfare recipients, particularly the non-aged, is indolence, lack of energy and ambition, in general, good-for-nothings and ne'er-do-wells feeding at the public trough. In the welfare area, as in others, program decisions may be made which are inconsistent with a successful program because administrators and staff genuinely share this public sentiment. One sometimes encounters sincere expressions of disbelief that anything really can be accomplished with "those people." It should be noted that no single agency has a monopoly on such sentiments.

From this brief review, it is clear that improving the earning power of the poor is a tough, complex problem. Training is one input in the process of rehabilitation and upgrading but it is not obviously the most important one. However, the basic point is that the population at risk suffers multiple handicaps and that overcoming these requires a combination of services tailored to individual needs.

These problems will not change with an interdepartmental shift in the locus of a program like Work Experience and Training. The success of this and similar programs depends on bringing together a variety of services to serve those in need. The substantive issue in any jurisdictional issue is whether an administrative transfer of ultimate responsibility will enhance the chance of accomplishing this goal.

Making a judgment on such a question requires a knowledge of the programs which are focused on the poverty group and its problems, an evaluation of how successful these programs are under existing and alternative administrative arrangements in achieving program potential and a decision as to who among the poor shall be served since with limited resources, not all can be.

Poverty, welfare, and title V priorities

The target group of the Work Experience and Training Program is the adult non-aged poor. Their number bulks large among those who are poor. As a group, there were, in 1965, 11.5 million households accounting for 32.7 million persons in poverty. Of these:

- 4.2 million households, accounting for 5.4 million persons, were aged;
- 7.3 million households, accounting for 27.3 million persons, were non-aged.

It is this group of 7.3 million poor households accounting for 27.3 million persons which is the prime target group of the Title V Program.

Of the non-aged households:

- 5.1 million households, accounting for 25.2 million persons were family units;
- 2.2 million households, accounting for 2.2 million persons were unrelated individuals.

Of the 5.1 million non-aged family units:

- 3.6 million households, accounting for 18.5 million persons were in male headed families;
- 1.5 million poor households, accounting for 6.8 million persons were headed by females.

In view of the extremely limited resources available through Title V to serve the population of non-aged, adult poor persons, it is necessary to establish some priorities for deciding who will be served. The underlying criteria which have been used in the Title V Program are family responsibilities and employment status. Priority has been given to the heads of families over those who are living alone with no family responsibilities and those who are unemployed over those who are employed.

Such a system of priorities narrows the target group considerably. In 1965, only 500 thousand of the 3.6 million male heads of families and 800 thousand of the 1.5 million female heads of families did not work. It is essentially from this group