their own efforts. The Model Cities legislation has stimulated serious efforts by concerned Mayors to grapple with their communities' complex problems. It would be nothing less than a disaster to snatch from the cities the funds and the hopes so recently held out to them.

Medicare, general aid to education, regional development and manpower retraining: these are for the most part the completion of a generation-old agenda. One hopes that these and the poverty programs have either won or are on the way to winning the same community acceptance as social security has achieved in the last three decades and the New Economics have acquired in the last five years.

On that possibly optimistic assumption, I shall proceed to the comparative newcomers, yet to take their place as part of the accepted arsenal of public policy. Income maintenance could hardly avoid becoming a public issue once America society became sufficiently productive so that the elimination of the financial component of poverty became possible. Last year the National Commission on Technology. Automation and Economic Progress estimated that a mere $11–12 billion would raise all individuals and families now below the poverty line above that line. How can a society capable of totally eliminating poverty at the expense of a redistribution of a mere 1½ per cent of its Gross National Product long refrain from doing so?

Possibly it is this uncomplicated human perception as much as the specific arguments in favor of income maintenance that has united such men of usually disparate opinions as the League for Industrial Democracy's Michael Harrington, Yale's and the New Frontier's James Tobin, and Chicago's and conservatism's Milton Friedman. But the rational arguments are exceedingly powerful in addition.

Of these the first and most significant concerns freedom of choice. A welfare client may well be a poorer judge of what is good for him than a trained social workers. This is the inevitable conclusion of the social work profession. All the same the welfare client may be a good deal better pleased with his life if he is permitted to satisfy his own pattern of preferences. Indeed a welfare client allowed free use of his income may arrive in time and of his own volition to a desirable standard of expenditure, even by the criteria of other. A person on welfare does not by the fact of his misfortunes cease to be an adult eager to exercise whatever liberty of choice an exiguous income permits him.

By itself the libertarian argument is a sufficient ground for the substitution of income maintenance for case-by-case welfare administration of aid. And there are two more reasons at the least for supporting the change of approach. One is the simple fact that trained social workers are too few in number and too burdened by the administration of complicated, semi-penal regulations to offer the assistance that their clients might conceivably benefit from and that current social welfare theory believes to be indispensable.

A second argument is related to our good luck in possessing ready at hand two much more efficient mechanisms for the handling of transfer payments, the social security system and the Internal Revenue Service. The Social Security System could readily administer a scheme which focused upon family allowances, a version of income maintenance now in effect in Canada and strongly supported for the United States by former Assistant Secretary of Labor Daniel P. Moynihan. Alternatively the Internal Revenue Service could graft a negative income tax upon the existing rate structure. Few would advocate income maintenance primarily upon efficiency grounds. Still, it is reassuring to realize how neatly efficiency and social compassion here coincide.

Income maintenance is a nearly ideal approach to the problems of the large numbers of welfare recipients whose incomes place them below the poverty line either because age, family situation, or disability excludes them from gainful employment, or, though they hold jobs, adult male workers are unable to earn enough to support themselves and their dependents. However, by itself income maintenance fails to cope with the difficulties and the needs of individuals who, although eager to work, are by current market definitions unemployable. Here the notion of the government as employer of last resort has much merit.

The first merit is the concrete social gain realized by the performance of work in the public sector which badly needs the doing. Hospitals, parks, schools, museums, and other public institutions are notoriously crippled by the shortage of human hands. This qualitative, impressionistic judgment is supported by the