

Widows receiving DIC as of June 30, 1967, numbered 153,105. Of these, an identifiable group now evolving from the hostilities in Vietnam (and elsewhere around the globe) is estimated in excess of 8,300. These younger widows have attracted considerable concern because many of them were married before they had a chance to complete their education or to practice their skills in a work setting. It is obvious that this group would benefit from additional education and training. Older widows receiving DIC would also gain, for now they often experience difficulty in finding employment because of their age or because their skills are outmoded.

The Commission recommends a training program for all widows receiving DIC. We believe such training should be directed toward a goal assuring employment, rather than function as a program of general education.

Under our program, financial assistance would be provided each eligible widow by increasing her DIC at the rate of \$100 per month while enrolled in and pursuing an approved full-time program. For minimum schooling of three regular class sessions per week, widows would receive \$60 per month in addition to DIC payments. Entitlement to training would extend for a maximum of 36 months. Eligibility for enrollment in this program would expire at the end of eight years from the date of death of the veteran from whom eligibility is derived or from the date of legislative enactment, whichever is later.

Criteria for approval of courses and measurement of full-time and part-time training would parallel those which apply to enrollment under Chapter 35, Title 38 U.S.C. Counseling for this training program would be optional but required for a second change in program or for re-entry after termination for unsatisfactory progress or conduct.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 31

The Commission recommends establishment of an educational assistance program for wives of veterans who have a total disability, permanent in nature, resulting from a service-connected disability.

Background to Recommendation:

Totally disabled veterans and their families must rely on VA compensation for support. Although this level of