

ure by increases in the number drawing OASDI benefits, and in the size of the checks, persons aged 65 or older remained the most poverty-stricken age group in the Nation.

Though the odds that households headed by women would have insufficient income were less than they used to be, the improvement was less marked than for units headed by men. In 1959, of all households counted poor, 5.4 million had a woman at the head and 8 million were headed by a man. By 1966, the number poor with a man at the head dropped 2.4 million, but the number poor and headed by a woman remained unchanged.

The number of poor families with a man at the head and children under age 18 went from 3.8 to 2.4 million in 1966. But the 1½ million poor families headed by a woman with children numbered almost as many as those poor in 1959. Thus, though the total count of children in poverty was one-fourth less than it had been 7 years earlier, the number poor in families with a woman at the head was actually one-tenth higher.

The peril of poverty for the child with several brothers and sisters remained high: The family with five or more children was still 3½ times as likely to be poor as the family raising only one or two, and, just as in earlier years, almost one-half the poor children were in families with five or more children. The number of poor families with five or more children remained almost unchanged—0.9 million in 1966, compared with 1.1 million in 1959—with the added disadvantage that 29 percent of them now were headed by a woman, instead of 18 percent as in 1959. What is more, the economic deprivation associated with a father's absence was more common than it used to be: from 1959–66 the proportion of all children under age 18 who were in a family headed by a woman rose from 9 to 11 percent; and in parallel fashion it was one in three of all poor children in 1966 who were minus a father, not one in four as in 1959.

There was other evidence that economic growth had not helped all population groups in equal measure. The nonwhite population generally had not fared as well as the white during the 1959–66 upswing, though by the end of the period it was making greater strides than at the beginning. To be sure, in 1966 it was one in three nonwhite families who were poor compared with one in 10 white families whereas in 1959 it was one in two nonwhite families and one in seven white families who were poor. It is also a fact that the nonwhite made up about one-third of the Nation's poor in 1966, compared with just over one-fourth in 1959—a widening disadvantage explained only in small part by the greater population growth among the nonwhite.

The farm population, though still poorer than the nonfarm, had reduced the incidence of poverty by nearly one-half, a rate of improvement twice that registered by the nonfarm population. But with the nonfarm population growing while the farm population steadily declined, it was likely that many families had merely exchanged a farm address for a city one at which they might be even worse off than before.

It is clear that in the period since 1959, poverty, which never was a random affliction, has become even more selective, and some groups initially vulnerable are now even more so. There is still no all-