

that we have not emphasized so much, is the fact that there were 22 children per thousand under age 18 in South Carolina receiving AFDC help in the same month that there were 110 per thousand in West Virginia, States which are almost equal in per capita income.

So it is not a question of having to document the need for uniform national standards, but rather, a question of how soon we are going to move to require them.

In looking at the current situation and what we need to do now, as well as what we may do in the future, is it important to emphasize again the need to remove the 1967 coercive and restrictive provisions in public assistance, and to require conformity up to the maximum financial provisions of present law, which would have substantial benefits for the very poor. We are not even taking full advantage of those ameliorative provisions in our present law in any of the States, to my knowledge.

We have seen that this type of change is very difficult. Efforts to enact legislation to require States to meet their own standards in full have not been successful. We are all familiar with the efforts that have been expended to try to remove the more restrictive of the 1967 amendments.

Again, we come to this question of diversity of the caseload, the fact that we look at the aged and the disabled and the blind from one point of view and with little criticism, even though this has not moved us to provide adequate grants generally for them. But as we turn to the AFDC caseload, there are all the questions of employability, what we do in the way of extending training, and so on. These have already been discussed by both Dr. Miller and Dr. Tobin. I would like to make one further point; that is the importance of providing supportive services in the community so that the very poor woman has the same opportunity for choice as to what she does with regard to employment and the care of her children that the women in more fortunate circumstances have. Sometimes we tend to disregard the importance of her being able to act as the same free agent with regard to determining what she considers best for her family that we take as a matter of ordinary decision on the part of most women.

I would like to reemphasize what has already been pointed out, that from our sketchy research and what we know empirically, poor women are motivated to seek jobs and to help improve the situation of their families as are women who do not fall into this category. Also, it is important as we move forward to think in terms of what we can do to stress the tremendous movement in the AFDC caseload.

For example, in 1967, cases closed represented 42 percent of the average monthly AFDC caseload for the calendar year. These are not people who come and stay on assistance to the last possible month. Rather, they go off very promptly on the average.

We are beginning to recognize that it is necessary as we look at the present program, let alone what we consider for the long haul, to move as promptly as possible to financial need as the single eligibility criterion, that we adopt across the country a simplified method for determining eligibility. This is often referred to as a declaration or affidavit. Of course, there must be test checks. The test checks that have been made show that this is just as efficient as former procedures as well as being a far more economical and dignified system.