

setting of a floor of income for all Americans, because I think it has substantial bearing on how we reached the conclusion that our present income maintenance system must be modified, improved, and extended.

Let me now talk about the association and how our social workers came to believe that our social assistance program was not working as well as it should be. We believe that it would not be enough to restructure the program by which we provide some financial security to people, but we have looked to qualitative and quantitative improvements in the public welfare program. We have sought for many years for exemption of earnings of employed children, the elimination of residence requirements, but we were not successful. The key recommendation of the 1962 Public Welfare Amendments was directed toward rehabilitative services to ADC families by trained personnel.

I will add quickly that we were wrong in our support of the 1962 amendments, when some of us suggested that by adding trained social workers, we could move people out of poverty—the problem of poverty is far more complex and you can provide all the caseworkers you want to people; if the opportunity for employment is not available, if we do not do something with housing, if we do not do something with racial prejudice, if we do not do a whole lot of things which social workers do not control and which are controlled and handled at a different level of government, then casework will fail, and casework has failed from that point of view.

We supported employment programs and we preferred employment programs to money grants for employables. Circumstances then required us to settle for a program of Federal participation in work relief which was not implemented legislatively until the Economic Opportunity Act, outside of the Social Security Act, initiated the community work and training program.

Now, as recently as 1962, we held that there was nothing radically wrong with our public assistance system that more adequate payments, the provision of a category of general assistance, and the elimination of residence requirements and the addition of trained staff would not correct. Although some of us had reservations about the means test and investigatory procedures, most of us sought correctives through more enlightened and compassionate administration of the program.

We have now come to the conclusion that this simply is not enough and that our public assistance program must be relocated in the spectrum of programs necessary for an adequate system of income assurance, and present systems substantially reformed and reorganized.

At our 1967 delegate assembly of the National Association of Social Workers, a program was recommended as follows:

First: The expansion of the general economy and of public service employment is required, since work will continue to constitute the major source of income for most American families in the foreseeable future. Adequate minimum wage administration should provide a floor for all earnings.

Second: The improvement and expansion of social insurances—old-age, survivors, disability and health insurance, unemployment and workmen's compensation—in order to make the fullest possible contribution to filling the gap that now exists between income from work and decent income for all citizens.