

lack of financial means. Thus the cruel legacy of poverty is passed from parents to children."

Though there has been, and continues to be, improvement, the number with incomes above the poverty index yet below the low-income level remains almost unchanged. No upward adjustment was made to take account of the higher standard of living that a rising real income makes possible for the majority. The Nation's poor are fewer in number but the difference between what they have and what the rest of America enjoys is greater. In 1964 the poor were farther way from the mainstream of American good living than those in the poverty inventory in 1959. The gap widens as our Nation's productivity increases each year. The record of progress is not encouraging for all. The nonwhite population, though now in better straits, continues to experience poverty at a rate more than three times that of their white fellow Americans. For nonwhite youngsters in large families, the prospect of a childhood free from poverty grows dimmer. This is the plight of the employed poor.

Approximately 40 percent of all poverty is suffered by those who are not, or who, because of physical or emotional disability, should not be employed. Our senior citizens comprise 25 percent of this group.

In 1967 persons 65 and over formed less than 10 percent of the total population, but comprised 16.2 percent of the Nation's poor. The current ratio of the poor older person has risen to 18.2 percent. Senior citizens remain the most poverty-stricken group in the Nation. More than half of elderly poor live alone, and the majority of them are women. In almost all situations the only constant sources of income—if any—were benefits provided by the Social Security Administration. In December 1964, the average payment to an aged beneficiary was \$79 a month—\$948 a year—\$592 a year less than the established poverty index. Overall analysis estimates that 35 percent of all social security beneficiaries in 1965 were living in poverty. An additional 38 percent would have been poor except for their benefit checks. Only about one-fourth could have lived above the poverty line in the absence of the social security benefit. Social security benefits alone are not adequate to fight the war on poverty. The proportion in poverty of this group is more than 2½ times as high as among those 18 to 64.

Over 15 percent of those in poverty cannot be brought to economic productivity. They are the chronically ill, the handicapped, disabled, and the mentally ill. Included in this figure are women who are sole parents and should not be required to work full time.

The recent Public Welfare Amendments—1967—elaborated and expanded the old program. Aid to families with dependent children (AFDC) provides assistance whether the father is absent from the home or is in the home. There is still incentive for fathers to work. Where AFDC was needed as a result of unemployment, the average time the family has needed assistance has been 9 months. When the need is due to incapacity or loss of the main wage earner, the average time a family requires assistance is 3 years. At any given time, about 1 million families with more than 3 million children receive assistance under this program. At the present time payments total approximately \$2 billion, 55 percent coming from federal funds.

The present program does not demoralize the family life of the recipients to the degree as had been under ADC. However, with an