

average income of \$142 a month for a family of four, poverty still dominates the scene of their existence. Though participants in this program are granted extended social and medical services, the cry for a decent income persists.

Our Nation's rural population continues to dwell in poverty. The risk of poverty for the farm dweller is twice as great as that prevailing among the rest of the population. These rural working poor need, not only a higher minimum wage, but benefits of collective bargaining and of economic protection programs which are currently nonexistent.

The foregoing are a few examples of the plight of our 60 million individuals who exist in poverty or who, though employed, live on an economic level which deprives them of an honorable, dignified existence.

The 1967 Public Welfare Amendments can serve as a foundation for improving and expanding public welfare services. In Federal programs in which the States share responsibility, this responsibility should be on an equitable basis across the Nation. Unless basic human needs for food, clothing, shelter and health care are adequately provided for, it will be impossible to develop an effective service system.

The poverty roster today seems to record our past failure to end the scourge of poverty. We must differentiate and provide for the diverse groups among the poor.

Poverty can be reduced appreciably by improvement of existing social welfare programs for income support which are designed to meet the needs of the elderly, of mothers of young children and of others who cannot work. Job training and equal employment opportunity should be available to those who are willing and able to work. Extension of educational facilities to today's young people will not only tend to ease the current poverty gap but will be an economic and social assurance for them as the adults of the future.

We believe that all citizens are entitled to a decent level of living with adequate housing, clothing, food, education, medical care, and social service. It is important that every effort be made to insure that as many people as possible are employed; but when there is no job for them and when they cannot be trained for an available job, then the Government is obligated to both work toward helping that person to become economically independent and to provide him with the means for a decent and dignified living in the meantime. It would appear that some methodology for providing a guaranteed minimum income would be a good answer.

We are not prepared to propose a particular methodology since we are still in the process of studying various possibilities. Our inclination at this point is to favor some experimentation with several methodologies as we phase into a national program for the provision of a guaranteed minimum income.

We cannot overcome poverty until we insure that all families have a decent level of income. It will take a great deal of other programs and services, also, to insure family independence, sound use of money, and the relief of other problems related to poverty conditions, but a minimum decent income will be essential.

The present systems of income maintenance in the United States do not guarantee a minimum income at a level that would permit reasonable subsistence and decent living. I believe this is so because people