

Representative CURTIS. And you will get a certain age group above 75 that are not capable of working. But the age group of 65 to 75 are.

Senator PROXMIRE. How about the mothers who take care of their children?

Representative CURTIS. I bow to Mrs. Griffiths on this, but I think a large proportion of these mothers not only can work but would like to. The social security amendments do not mean this picture that has been presented of a mother with a 9-month-old baby being told that she has to go out and work or she loses welfare.

Senator PROXMIRE. While I would always bow to our chairman, that is one area where I would certainly prefer to leave the decision up to the mother.

Representative GRIFFITHS. Is it not true that a great number of these women can and would like to work?

Representative CURTIS. Of course. Secretary Cohen called up in great surprise that in a survey in New York, 70 percent indicated they want to work.

Senator PROXMIRE. Well it may be 4 million or 8 million, I think it is closer to 8, you think it is closer to 4.

How about the 12 million in the families where the breadwinners work full time but who are poor?

Representative CURTIS. This, again, I think is an overstatement, but I would like to see the basis for these statistics. But certainly, we need to look into this area and find out the profile of these kinds of people.

This, again, I have put it in terms of underutilized economic resources.

Senator PROXMIRE. Well, they are in Missouri; they are in Wisconsin. We know the people in rural areas and other areas who work very hard, work long hours; some of them are very efficient. Still their income is very low.

Representative CURTIS. Well, when you talk about the farmer, I really worry about him, because he is not only a worker, but he is also an investor. I think we have some real problems here, but on the other hand, let us face it, they seem to live pretty well.

I think we have to be more realistic in what we have called poverty. You come down in the Ozarks and try to rout out some of these so-called poverty people and you will get into trouble, because they really like the way they live, and they do not live poorly according to their ideas. There are many people that go down there to live.

We have to do a little more analysis of just what this group really consists of. I am sure that there are a number of these who do not like their situation, who want out of it, and actually something can and should be done for them. But I do not know the number of them. It cannot be determined just by this arbitrary income level.

Senator PROXMIRE. Would you not agree, however, that if you had some kind of a program, and I would prefer to call it a work incentive program, a program to provide some supplement to the inadequate income, and sometimes it is pitifully inadequate, that it might be salutary in the sense that at least they could provide better for their children?

Representative CURTIS. This is the thrust of the bill that I have on employment equalization, where we are dealing with the hard core unemployed. In this instance, they do not even have work habits and