

dren's allowances. These are, however, other methods of approaching the same goals, including some form of "income insurance" which would be based upon a vast enlargement of the insurance aspects of the federal Social Security system.

Any such change in the basic method of providing essential income to Americans in need would obviously have to be made by the federal government. It would be impractical for a single state—even as large a state as New York—to undertake such a change on its own.

The Board believes that these proposals deserve earnest, serious and prompt consideration by all citizens and by the Congress. However, it urges that any such consideration should keep in mind the following reservations:

1. That it would be a disservice to the inhabitants of the State of New York if a nationwide system of income maintenance were to be adopted that, while benefiting needy persons in other parts of the country, worked to the disadvantage of the affected persons living in New York State. This state has one of the highest levels of public assistance in the country, in the various categories of assistance, and in some categories the highest of any state. This is not a matter of generosity on the part of the state's taxpayers, but only a clearer recognition of the responsibility one citizen has to another in a civilized society. It would be a tragedy if, in the effort to improve the condition of the poor throughout the country, the condition of the poor in New York State were to be made worse.

2. That there must be safeguards against the use of a major change in the form of income maintenance as an unintentional device to reduce the effectiveness of those social programs which are intended to assist people toward the dignity and self-respect that comes from self-support.

No form of income maintenance can take the place of reinforcement of existing programs and the creation of needed new programs for employment opportunity, decent housing, improved health care, educational opportunity and elimination of discrimination.

3. That we must guard against the creation of a permanent underclass of Americans whose chief characteristic will be their dependency. The objective should be to use the device of income maintenance as a foundation on which to build a system of social services designed to eliminate the existence of any group of persons relying upon public assistance, under whatever label.

The Board has not reached the point, in its own deliberations, of agreeing on any particular program of income maintenance that would replace the present system. However, it is continuing its study of such proposals, and will express its views to the public and to the Congress when and if it concludes that one or another of the proposals, or a combination of them, would be in the best interests of all, and particularly of the poor people in this State and nation.

CONCLUSION

We are keenly conscious of the intensive and thoughtful consideration given by a large number of people, many of them new to social welfare, to the problems of dependency in our nation and their possible solutions.

Undoubtedly the most significant aspect of the Arden House Conference was that it represented, as Governor Rockefeller characterized it, "a unique and unprecedented concentration of American leadership on the problem of public welfare." It had been the aspiration of the Board to enlist, perhaps for the first time, the real interest and involvement of our top national industrial leadership, and then to secure from the members of that group a commitment to continuing participation in the resolution of the problems of public welfare. These objectives have been achieved beyond our wildest dreams.

In the regional Conferences there developed a healthy, continuing awareness on the part of both well known and new spokesmen that these were the problems of our whole society and that every sector of our community life shares responsibility for their solutions. Reflecting a readiness to comprehend the facts, to understand their significance, and to eschew a merely visceral reaction, the public displayed a truly enlightened climate of opinion and concern. The Newburgh syndrome has been replaced by a compassionate, informed but tough-minded regard for people rather than an anxiety for dollars only. And the business of public welfare is no longer the exclusive concern of the social services establishment. This augurs well for all of us, recipient, worker and taxpayer.