

Income flow is, in general, the major cure for poverty, especially white poverty. But for Black poverty income flow is not enough. Subjected to 3½ centuries of white racism Blacks require, in addition to income flow, symbols of acceptance. Most important among such symbols have become national policies of open housing and integrated schools.

These short-run measures would go a long way toward the elimination of poverty and, also, toward the alleviation of present interracial tensions. But they would not constitute adequate long-run anti-poverty programs. For the long run there must be a great increase in investment in education so that every child, white as well as black, has the opportunity for effective schooling. Every child must be given the opportunity to acquire the basic skills, the saleable skills and the citizenship skills to enable him to assume the responsibilities and obligations, as well as the rights, of American citizenship. Without such an increased investment in human resources the present poverty situation may be indefinitely recycled from generation to generation. Without adequate investment in education other anti-poverty programs would be the equivalent of attempting to mop up the floor before the faucets are turned off.

The elimination of poverty in the United States, then, consists in large measure of providing equality of opportunity to millions of Americans who, hitherto, have been denied equal access to the American economy and society. A number of the present anti-poverty programs recognize this fact, but the resources allocated thus far to fight poverty, both in moneys and symbols of acceptance, fall far short of the mark. In no urban community in the United States have the resources allocated to combat poverty reached a level of critical mass so as to have major impact. Dribbles of anti-poverty resources which fail to achieve critical mass may be much more expensive in the long run than short run expenditures large enough to have significant effect. The United States has not yet been willing or able to face up to the magnitude of the effort required to eliminate poverty and, thus, to deal with the "urban problem" or, more accurately, the Afro-American Revolt.

A blueprint for the elimination of Black poverty is now available in the recently released Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders. It has been estimated that the implementation of the recommendations in this report would require annual expenditures of over \$30 billion.

Concluding Observation.—1. There is competent economic judgment that holds that we can afford to eliminate poverty, even if we continue to be caught in the Vietnam hostilities. One point that can be made is that our annual increase in GNP, in constant dollars, is by itself quite adequate to do the job. In any case, it is absurd to argue that we cannot afford to resolve the urban crisis, because we shall be increasing our expenditures whether we think we can afford it or not. It is certain that public expenditures to deal with the problem of poverty and its consequences will greatly increase. The only uncertainty that remains is that about which of three channels the increased expenditures will take. One is the channel of increased investment in human resources—adequate income flow, housing and education. The second is the channel of increased expenditures for security—police, national guard, army, and concentration camps. The third is the channel of increased expenditures for rebuilding what may become an increasingly larger riot-devastated urban and metropolitan America.

The American people are at an historic crossroads. But we no longer have the choice of continuing the present relatively low levels of taxation and public expenditure in respect of poverty and especially Afro-American poverty. We have only the choice of choosing from among three alternatives—investing in human resources, creating an "apartheid" society, or rebuilding riot-destroyed cities.