the hilt, that economic progress and social progress call essentially for the same policies and programs.

More consumption relative to investment would have been, and still would be, more conducive to both types of equilibrium. Better income distribution would enlarge the propensity to consume. Lifting the poor to at least minimum-decency standards of consumption and living would open up additional markets for the products of our factories and our farms. More rapid expansion of public-priority services in the fields of health, education, and housing, and some others, would not only serve the cause of social justice and make deep inroads upon poverty, but would also improve productivity, open up new job opportunities, and augment a more healthful and sustainable rate of economic growth than we have recently experienced. All of these propositions are so close to universally accepted, and so explicit even in the pronouncements at times of the "New Economics" and of the CEA, that the question naturally arises as to why these pronouncements have not been translated into more effective action.

Poverty and income maldistribution

The pertinent facts are brutally clear. In 1967, 5.3 million American multiple-person families and 4.9 million unattached individuals lived in absolute and dismal poverty, even according to the low poverty-income ceilings officially set by the Social Security Administration in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The total number of people living in abject poverty in 1967 aggregated somewhere in the neighborhood of 26 million people, or about 13.5 percent of the total population in that year.

In addition, about 11.0 million families and about 2.4 million unattached individuals, coming to about 35.4 million people lived above the officially established poverty-income ceilings, but in deprivation nevertheless. Therefore, in the neighborhood of 61.4 million people, or not very far from one-third of the Nation in 1967, lived either in poverty or deprivation. It is noteworthy, in this connection, that the Bureau of Labor Statistics in the U.S. Department of Labor indicated in 1967 that somewhere in the neighborhood of $9,000 for a four-person family and about $3,400 for an unattached individual would be required to maintain a *moderate* standard of living in metropolitan areas.[7]

Even though all empirical evidence proves conclusively that optimum economic growth and reasonably full employment are by far the most important avenues toward the liquidation of poverty, it hardly seems conceivable that substantial redistribution programs are not also essential. They would be essential in any event, because the concept of poverty is and should be in part a relative concept, which cannot be blind to the state of the industrial arts and the general income situation throughout the Nation. It is thus of high import that we have thus far made very little progress toward improved income distribution since World War II. Among multiple-person families in 1947, the top income fifth enjoyed 43 percent of the total money income of families, while the lowest fifth obtained only 5 percent, the lowest two-fifths only 17 percent, and the lower three-fifths only 34 percent. In 1966, the top fifth enjoyed 41 percent, while the lowest

[7] See chart 8, following text.