Movement to Outlaw Poverty

ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION
May 1970
by Dick Schwitzgebel

1. HR 16311 (Nixon's Welfare Reform proposal) has been returned to Secretary Finch for major surgery and may never surface again in a recognizable form. It could not have happened to a more deserving bill. HR 16311 was basically a political move by the President in face of a Democratic congress in an election year. It offered almost nothing to the poor except in Southern states. It did fool many well-meaning persons who thought it was a foot in the door but it did not get bread on the table for the poor. It deserves to die in surgery.

2. S 3433 (The Harris Bill) is still before the Senate Finance Committee and needs the prodding of 1000's of letters and telegrams to get it up for consideration. This bill would eliminate absolute poverty through an income supplement program tied to the poverty index--$3600 annually for an urban family of four, with enough work incentive rhetoric to please those who are unwilling to face the facts that work is not the answer to poverty. The bill would eliminate the welfare system and many other costly bureaucracies that attempt to deal with poverty by bits and pieces. It would make it possible for every individual and family in America to begin to live in health and decency.

3. S 3780 (National WRO's Adequate Income Plan) was introduced by Senator McCarthy April 30 and referred to Senate Finance Committee. This bill would assure all Americans of a basic standard of income--$2000 for an individual and $5500 for a family of four. There would be automatic adjustments for variation in family size; price differences in various parts of the nation and changes in cost-of-living.

This legislation is the first to deal realistically with poverty and hunger in America. According to determinations made by the Bureau of Labor Statistics the minimum need for an urban family of four in March 1969 was $6567. For San Diego it was $6792. These facts make Nixon's bill look like a trick; and the Harris bill puny.

WHAT TO DO → THE MOVEMENT MOVES AS YOU MOVE → AS YOU MOVE OTHERS →

Keep writing and wiring members of the Senate Finance Committee, especially Chairman Russell Long who is hung-up on work incentives and related myths about the poor. Urge him to read the report of the President's Commission on Income Maintenance and get his head on straight about work and poverty. Urge him to have the summary of that report read into the hearings of the Finance Committee so that the public can get the facts and help dispel the myths about work being the solution to poverty. Urge him to study and get an analysis of the OEO experiments on Income Maintenance (ref."Well Fare, not Welfare" copy enclosed)

Urge these senators to mark-up either S 3433 or S 3780 to eliminate poverty and the welfare system.

Russell Long	Eugene McCarthy	Fred Harris
Clinton Anderson	Vance Hartke	Harry Byrd, Jr.
Albert Gore	J. W. Fulbright	John Williams
Herman Talmadge	Abraham Rubicoff	

Address: Senate Office Building, Washington D.C. 20510

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