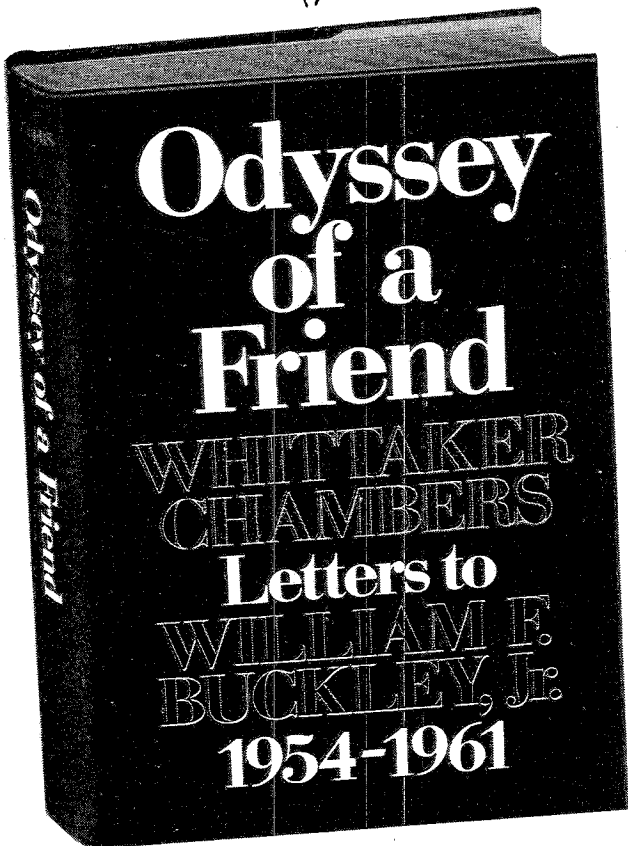


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NATIONAL REVIEW

**The Letters
of
Whittaker Chambers**



**What's still wrong
with Nixon's
Welfare Proposals**

ERNEST VAN DEN HAAG





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NATIONAL REVIEW

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SOME MODEST PROPOSALS

On the whole, Mr. Nixon's welfare proposals are good, says the author. But he suggests a few refinements calculated to startle the social workers who might have to carry them out

What's Missing in Nixon's Welfare Program

ERNEST VAN DEN HAAG

MR. NIXON's welfare program, which Congress is about to tackle, is a step in the right direction; perhaps as big a step as is politically feasible. In the short run, his proposals are likely to increase costs; in the longer run they bid fair to reduce it; and there are many advantages over the present system in equity and economy. Let me dwell just on three general virtues in these proposals.

1) The 100 per cent tax on earnings of welfare recipients is abolished—they will have some economic incentive to work and earn, and to decrease their dependence on welfare payments, by being allowed to retain the first \$60 of their monthly earnings without losing any welfare benefits; only 50 per cent of additional earnings is deducted from welfare payments up to a maximum of about \$5,000.

This means that some hardworking families now become eligible, without having to stop working, whereas under present law they are actually better off, in some cases, particularly if there are many children, if they stop working. Further, employables are helped and required to seek employment or, if necessary, to be trained for it.

2) The Federal Government will finance minimum payments of \$1,600 yearly per needy family of four, regardless of location. This will lighten the burden of some states yet increase their payments. By making payments a little more equal, it will reduce the tendency of recipients to migrate to the states where benefits are highest, such as New York.

3) Payments for needy families will no longer depend on the absence of a breadwinner. Hence, the incentive to abandonment is reduced.

The New York welfare bureaucracy



bitterly protested the countrywide federal minimum grants of \$1,600 because the states that paid little will get much more federal money per recipient than states, such as New York. Which is true. The Federal Government proposes not to supplement state payments beyond \$1,600, but to pay only up to \$1,600. New York would have liked the Federal Government to pay 50 per cent of whatever New York chooses to pay. The protest demonstrates not only that the protesters are foolish—which was well known—but also that they are uncommonly stupid, which was not. For nothing could help the New York welfare system more—nothing could decrease the total New York outlay more—than increases in the payments to welfare recipients in, say, Mississippi.

The New York system is overloaded because New York payments are high a) relative to payments elsewhere, b) relative to job earnings. The system can be helped only by reducing payments in New York, or raising them elsewhere. The first is unlikely to happen to the required degree. The Federal Government proposes the second—and the New York welfare establishment complains! Yet the New York load will be lightened only if people in Mississippi have less reason to migrate to New York—which is the case when the difference in welfare payments is reduced, with federal help, in Mississippi's favor.

NOTHING COULD BE WORSE for New York than an increase in the federal subsidy for New York: such an increase might stabilize, or increase, the differential between New York and the states that pay less—i.e., the attraction of New York for welfare recipients elsewhere. It would also tend to increase the size of payments relative to earnings from jobs. Yet that is what the New York welfare establishment is clamoring for. It would be a good way of getting more "clients," to the detriment not only of New York taxpayers, but of the United States economy as a whole, and of the New York economy in particular. Every time welfare payments are increased, more people become welfare clients—the New York experience demonstrates as much irrefutably: a far greater proportion of the poor receive welfare payments in N.Y. than in Chicago or L.A.—simply because N.Y. pays about one-third more per recipient. (It is unlikely that people worse than now appointed would be elected as top administrators of public

The Nixon proposals, by increasing incentives to work, reducing incentives to migrate to urban areas, providing training, and reducing the incentive to abandon families, are moving in the right direction.

Mr. Hazlitt also fears that job training will be ineffective, and that the obligation to accept jobs will not be enforced. This is possible, but not necessary; some risk of maladministration is inherent in any activity and should not lead us to oppose proposals, unless the desired effects can not be achieved because maladministration can be shown to be certain to defeat them.

However, some attention should be paid to the social workers likely to administer Mr. Nixon's proposals. Those now coming from social work schools seem to contribute as much to the creation of social problems as they do to their solution. To the last woman, they are filled with utopian notions and psycho-moral clichés which distort their perception of society far more than simple ignorance could. In the past utopianism was wholly moral and religious. Now it is economic and political. Certainly no improvement. Exceptions are rare and occur *despite* training. There is at present no evidence to indicate that persons who have not attended schools of social work would do worse. Unless these schools can be fundamentally changed, social workers might just as well be selected on the basis of a simple examination, regardless of prior schooling.

Whereas Mr. Hazlitt fears that the work requirements in the Nixon proposals will be neglected, liberal and labor critics fear that they may be applied. They argue that mothers of school-aged children should be allowed to stay home and not be required to take jobs. Since many mothers of school-aged children do not receive welfare payments, yet do hold jobs, it is not apparent why welfare recipients should be privileged to place the burden of providing for their families on society—including these working mothers—if they so choose. Of course, the program requires reasonable and humane administration which takes special circumstances into consideration. (Anyway it would certainly be hard to compel an unwilling mother to work. But establishing the obligation will help.)

As to the job training program, the objectors say that it is not training but jobs that are needed; they argue that

the government should be the "employer of last resort" by hiring anyone who cannot find a job on the market. I am glad Mr. Nixon did not fall for this. There has been no lack of jobs. On the contrary, jobs, both skilled and unskilled, go begging. Welfare rolls have risen while unemployment has declined.

Some employable people on welfare might be able simply to acquire the skills to make them independent. In many other cases, training would have to change motivations, i.e., teach people who have depended on handouts that they can and should work. The obligation to undergo training, or to take a job, or both, is essential in this case.

In still other cases, the person remains unemployed and on welfare, because he regards the available jobs as being below his dignity; or, they pay less than he wants. Mr. Nixon's reforms will make it possible for such persons to work and receive supplemental welfare payments. The welfare system cannot set a wage floor; and it need not keep people artificially idle by supporting them at the expense of the taxpayer when they refuse available jobs.

The Major Problem

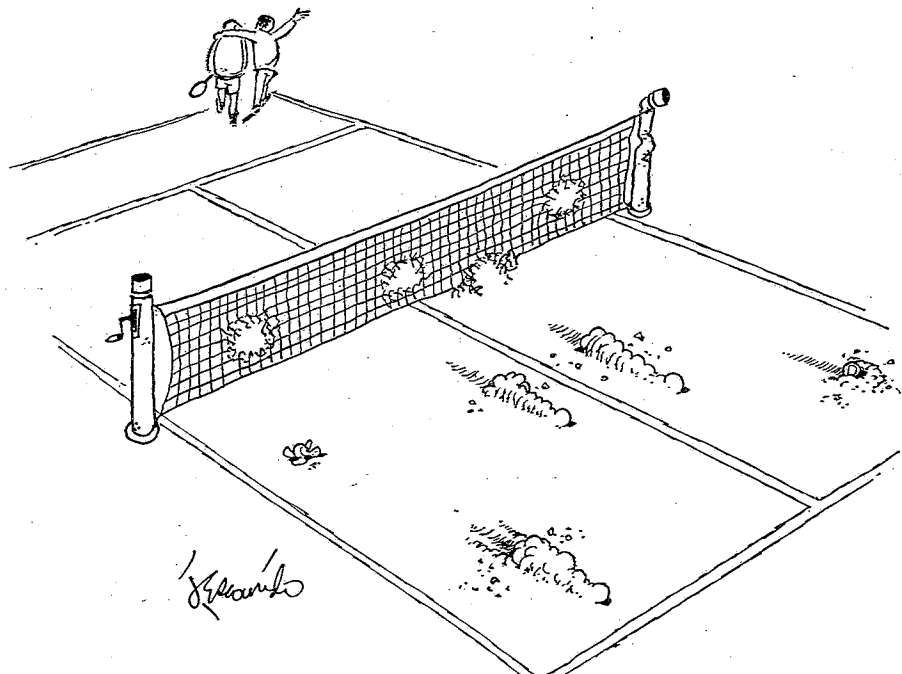
Useful as Mr. Nixon's proposals are, they require one major addition to which I will now turn.

The most costly, numerous and most rapidly increasing category of welfare recipients consists of families without

a father. They receive aid to dependent children. They are a category largely called into being, and increased, by the welfare system; and, no doubt, the category in which psychological injury to recipients is most frequent. Mr. Nixon proposes to abolish the financial reward for abandonment—for the creation of such families—which the welfare system hitherto had established. This is sound and overdue. But far more need be done. If Mr. Nixon's proposals become law, a man can still, with impunity, create and abandon a family which the welfare system will have to support. Abandonment would no longer increase the income of the abandoned family over what would be available with the father present. But abandonment would still increase the disposable income of the deserting father, who has his family supported by welfare money and can keep all his job earnings to himself. The incentive to desert, in the knowledge that the family will be provided for by the taxpayers, remains.

Thus, although helpful, Mr. Nixon's proposal will not be enough to stem the tide of abandoned families. Two supplementary measures are needed to serve, one as a positive, the other as a negative means toward the goal of minimizing the creation of fatherless families depending on welfare. The social cost of such families, of course, goes far beyond the cost of welfare payments. The latter in New York alone involves billions. The trend is up.

(Continues on page 99)



"Don't worry, kid . . . the way I look at it, when you got a little control . . ."

REAPING THE WHIRLWIND



PRINCIPLES AND HERESIES

As the established order comes under radical attack on a broad front, two apparently opposite conservative reactions are emerging. On the one hand, there are those who quite correctly see the origin of the new radicalism in the systematic liberal corrosion of the Western tradition and anticipate with pleasure the prospect of the sowers of the wind reaping the whirlwind. Such conservatives presumably believe that when liberalism has been thus swept away by radicalism, conservatism not radicalism will be the eventual victor.

On the other hand, there are those conservatives who believe that the radical attack is so threatening to the very survival of ordered existence that common cause must be made with all liberal forces who are willing to resist the radical onslaught. Those who hold this view, however, too often forget that their common interest with established liberalism is based on totally differing prepossessions. Conservatives are concerned with the preservation of the structure and fabric of civilization, even though that civilization is deeply corroded by decades of liberal influence. Those liberals who are available allies in resistance to radicalism and anarchy are defending first of all their power and influence; to the degree that they are defenders of civilization, it is only in the corroded form they have created. Indeed, it is the corrosion, not the civilization, to which their fealty is given. And the pathos of their condition—the condition of those liberals, for example, who are honestly fighting to preserve the universities—is that, in large part, it is the corrosive principle for which they stand that has brought into being the radicalism which has turned upon them.

It seems to me that there is no essential contradiction between the two conservative reactions. Both are right—at their own level. In the immediate

struggle with radicalism, conservatives and liberals can make common cause without conservatives giving up their basic critique of liberalism. It is one thing to work with liberal allies in a concrete situation where outrageous radical demands must be resisted, violent demonstrations repressed, the norms of social existence defended. This is a matter of working with anyone who recognizes and is willing to combat manifest evil—and, since reality breaks through into ideology, even relativist liberals do recognize evil as evil when it hits close enough to home. But it is another thing to be so blinded by immediate common interests as to forget that not only the present outbreak of radicalism, but much older and deeper ills of our society, are themselves the product of liberalism.

A CERTAIN FLEXIBILITY is required, the flexibility to fight against the most advanced and immediately threatening dangers with whatever allies come to hand, while never relaxing the basic critique of views and attitudes (even if held by present allies) against which conservatism by its very nature is arrayed. But, as it would be blind to conduct the battle against radicalism and mute the critique of liberalism, so it would be adventurous beyond reason to sit back, as some conservatives propose, and watch supinely as the radicals overwhelm our social order (however distorted by liberal influences) in a vain hope that out of chaos would come some conservative order. Such apocalyptic imaginings are the stuff of intellectual and spiritual sloth and despair. Indeed, the contrast that is sometimes made between the underlying assumptions of liberalism and today's radicalism is true only of such matters as style, propensity to violence and externality of immediate program. At the level of principle, radicalism simply represents the logical conclusion of those two essential components of modern liber-

alism: egalitarianism and relativism.

The egalitarian aspect is clearest in the New Left and black militant prongs of the attack; the relativist, in the challenge of the hippies and the life-style for which they proselytize. And all share with liberalism a massive ignorance of economics, a disdain for the productive process, a hostility to the producing majority. The constant refrain of both New Left and black militant, no matter what the particular demand put forward for the moment, is the expenditure of tens and hundreds of billions of dollars, to be secured through taxation by sequestering the hard-earned product of the working majority. Or when egalitarianism is not thus displayed, it takes the form of demands for the ending of discrimination between persons on the basis of their ability, such as "open admission" to universities, or, for that matter, "open graduation," without grades or standards to distinguish between the successful and unsuccessful. At every level the concept of excellence and differentiation on the basis of excellence, is attacked in the name of imposed equality.

As for the hippie life-style, relativism is its essence. On sex, on drugs, on responsibility, in its refusal to read and study, the hippie movement is no more than an extreme extension of liberalism's relativist attack upon the standards of civilization.

TO THE DEGREE that liberals are horrified by these extensions of their principles, they can be and are contemporary allies in the fight for the preservation of the civil order. But liberalism remains an enemy—the more so, having given birth to a radical progeny—and conservatives can only continue their long-term effort to supersede the principles of liberalism, while simultaneously engaging in the immediate and urgent resistance to the thrust of radicalism. □

SOME NECESSARY ADDITIONS TO MR. NIXON'S
WELFARE PROPOSALS

I

Mr. Nixon's Welfare program is a step in the right direction; perhaps as big a step as is politically feasible. In the short run, the proposals are likely to increase cost; in the longer run they bid fair to reduce it; and there are many advantages over the present system from the viewpoint of equity and economy. Let me dwell just on three general virtues in these proposals, (all of which I have advocated in the past)

1) The 100% tax on earnings of welfare recipients is abolished -- they will have some economic incentive to work and earn, and decrease their dependence on welfare payments, by being allowed to retain the first \$60 of their monthly earnings without losing any welfare benefits; only 50% of additional earnings is deducted from welfare payments up to a maximum of This means that some hardworking families now become eligible, without having to stop working, whereas under present law they are actually better off, in some cases, if they stop working. Further, employables are helped, and required, to seek employment, or if necessary, trained for it.

*Commentary
of Nixon
are necessary
children*

2) The Federal government will finance minimum payments of \$1600 yearly per needy family of four, regardless of location. This will lighten the burden of some states and increase their payments. By making payments a little more equal, it will reduce the tendency of recipients to migrate to the states where benefits are highest, such as New York.

3) Payments for needy families will no longer depend on the absence of a breadwinner. Hence, the incentive to abandonment is reduced.

II

The New York welfare bureaucracy bitterly protested the countrywide Federal yearly minimum grants of \$1600 because the states that paid little will get much more Federal money per recipient than the states, such as New York, who paid much more. Which is true. The Federal government proposes not to supplement state payments beyond \$1600, but to pay only up to \$1600. New York would have liked the

Federal government to pay 50% of whatever New York chooses to pay. ~~The~~ The protest demonstrates not only that the protesters are foolish--which is well known--but also that they are uncommonly stupid, which was not.)

For Nothing could help the New York welfare system more--nothing could decrease the total New York outlay more--than increases in the payments to welfare recipients in, say, Mississippi. The New York system is overloaded because New York payments are high a) relative to payments elsewhere, b) relative to job earnings. The system can be helped only by reducing payments in New York, or raising them elsewhere. The first is unlikely to happen to the required degree. The Federal government is doing the second--and the New York welfare establishment complains! Yet the load on New York will be lightened only if people in Mississippi have less reason to migrate to New York--which is the case when the difference in welfare payments is reduced, with Federal help, in Mississippi's favor.

Nothing could be worse for New York than an increase in the Federal subsidy for New York: such an increase might stabilize, or increase, the differential between New York and the states that pay less--i.e., the attraction of New York for welfare recipients elsewhere. It would also tend to increase the size of payments relative to earnings from jobs. That is what the New York welfare establishment is clamoring for. It would be a good way of getting more "clients", to the detriment not only of New York taxpayers, but of the United States economy as a whole, and of the New York economy in particular. Everytime welfare payments are increased, more people become welfare clients --the New York experience demonstrates as much irrefutably. (It is unlikely that people worse than now appointed would be elected as top administrators of public welfare. Therefore I favor electing commissioners rather than allowing the mayor to appoint them.)

From an economic viewpoint--alas, politically it might be hard to do; but is it really impossible? --it would be best to make Federal payments outside metropolitan centers higher--in purchasing power--than

inside so that welfare recipients would be financially better off in rural areas. The indirect costs incurred in cities are far greater than those incurred in rural areas, and the difference is great enough to warrant the cost of making rural areas irresistably attractive to welfare recipients.

Let me consider three other objections to the Nixon proposals.) Mr. Meany, speaking for the labour unions, objects that by subsidizing those who do not earn enough through their work the government would subsidize, and thereby encourage, low wage rates. Mr. Meany implies that without such encouragement wage rates would go up, or could be pushed up by unions, or by minimum wage laws. That would be nice, and save a lot of tax money. Unfortunately, although it is quite possible to prevent employers from paying less than a minimum fixed by unions or laws, it is not possible to compell them to hire workers at the wage rate fixed by ~~the~~^{it's}. Thus, if that wage rate is higher than what the worker is worth to employers -- what they are paying anyway -- he becomes unemployed: ~~Thus~~ when minimum wages are effective they create unemployment. Indeed ~~the~~ unemployment ~~rate~~ of unskilled adolescents, particularly black adolescents -- the group most affected by minimum wages -- goes up each time the minimum wage rate is raised. ~~Indeed, the~~ Minimum wage laws and union

activities have greatly contributed to the welfare problem. (Union leaders do not learn easily). The advantage of Mr. Nixon's proposal is precisely to make it possible to help a man unable to earn enough to support his family by his work, without discouraging him from working as is done at present, or causing him to become unemployed.

2) Professor James E. Estes in NR (Sept. 23, 1969) argues that Mr. Nixon "has presented a welfare program ... which ... would legitimize the concept ... [of a] guaranteed annual income ..." which concept Estes thinks has a "potential for disaster". However the "proposal" Professor Estes discusses is a strawman, bearing no resemblance either to Mr. Nixon's proposal or, for that matter, to Professor Milton Friedman's "negative income tax".

Professor Estes assumes that a yearly income of \$3500 would be guaranteed by the government (Mr. Nixon proposed \$1600) and calculates that this would amount to \$1.75 per hour. He argues that people would have "to clear at least \$1 an hour more for working than they could get for not working ... (and) might refuse to work for less than approximately \$3 an hour". This would lead to price increases, a higher guaranteed annual income and continued^{USA} inflation.

Professor Estes conveniently forgets that the Nixon proposal, unlike Professor Friedman's requires employables

to accept suitable employment (and if earnings are low supplements their pay). Under Professor Friedman's proposal a man satisfied with his "guaranteed annual income" might refuse to work; under Mr. Nixon's he could not, on pain of losing the "guaranteed" income.

However, even Professor Friedman's proposal is not vulnerable to Estes' argument. Estes assumes that the head of a family would be unwilling to work for less than about \$3 since he "could receive \$1.75 an hour for not working". Actually the wage rate for which the recipient would be willing to work will not depend on his "guaranteed" hourly income. Thus, if he were offered 10 hours of work per week at \$5 an hour, but lose his "guaranteed" income if he accepts, he would not work. For he would get \$50 and lose approximately \$70. But if he were offered 10 hours of work at \$1 an hour without losing his "guaranteed" income, he might accept -- his net weekly income would rise to \$80. Both Professor Friedman's proposal and Mr. Nixon's are so arranged that the net income of the recipient of government payments increases as he earns money through work, at whatever hourly rate. (The hourly rate accepted will depend on general market conditions.) Since he cannot increase government payments by adding hours of not working, his only way to increase his income is by working. Most people

receiving \$70 a week to support a family will want to increase their income. Thus the Nixon proposals are not likely to decrease wage rates (Meany) or to increase them (Estes). Professor Estes' fallacy is new, unlike Mr. Meany's, but otherwise ~~not~~ *improvement.*

3) Henry Hazlitt (NR Sept. 9, 1969) objects to Mr. Nixon's proposals in the first place because they would increase the number of people on the welfare rolls. This is true in the short, although not in the long run. However, the present welfare legislation would increase welfare rolls more (even though more slowly), and would ~~be~~ do so permanently. Mr. Nixon's proposal, although adding low salaried people, will ultimately get the employables off the rolls, or decrease payments to the semi-employables, by making ~~it~~ advantageous for all recipients to work. This seems a worthwhile investment, although ~~the~~ risk of failure which Mr. Hazlitt mentions (and regards as certainty) exists.

Mr. Hazlitt also points out that there will be pressure to increase the Federal payment of \$1600 now proposed by Mr. Nixon. Certainly. However, Mr. Hazlitt writes as though this pressure would not occur, or would be less likely to succeed, if Mr. Nixon's proposals were not enacted. Unfortunately Mr. Hazlitt does not tell why he thinks so. I guess that Mr. Hazlitt thinks public welfare payments are unnecessary, and that, once undertaken they become addictive:

increasing doses are craved until the addicted society no longer can support the habit.

Yet in all societies the indigent have to be supported. Better ways than ours may be found. But the question is not whether Mr. Nixon has found an ideal way, but rather whether his proposals improve on the present way. That they fall short of Mr. Hazlitt's ideal is beside the point.

The danger of addiction to public welfare payments, both of recipients and, possibly of politicians, is very real; it will be with us as long as there is any sort of welfare system. Hence this danger is not created by Mr. Nixon's proposals: pressure for higher and more extended welfare payments is continuous since Roosevelt. Perhaps we should "kick the habit". But Mr. Hazlitt has not proposed to stop all public assistance, nor told us how he would get the votes for such a proposal.

If the habit is not kicked, and the welfare payments continue, as well as pressure to increase them, the problem is how to make them least addictive. The Nixon proposals, by increasing incentives to work, reducing incentives to migrate to urban areas, providing training, and reducing the incentive to abandon families, are moving in the right direction.

Mr. Hazlitt also fears that job training will be ineffective, and that the obligation to accept jobs will not be enforced. This is possible, but not necessary; some risk of maladministration is inherent in any activity and should not lead us to oppose proposals, unless the desired effects can not be achieved because ~~the~~ maladministration can be shown to be certain to defeat them.

However, some attention should be paid to the social workers likely to administer Mr. Nixon's proposals. Those now coming from social work schools seem to contribute as much to the creation of social problems as they do to their solution. To the last woman they are filled with utopian notions and psycho-moral cliches which distort their perception of society far more than simple ignorance could. Excep- tions are rare and occur despite training. There is at present no evidence to indicate that persons who have not attended schools of social work would do worse. Unless these schools can be fundamentally changed social workers might just as well be selected on the basis of a simple examination, regardless of prior schooling.

Whereas Mr. Hazlitt fears that the work requirements in the Nixon proposals will be neglected, liberal and labor critics fear that they may be applied. They argue that mothers of school-age children should be allowed to stay home and not be required to take jobs. Since many

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Useful as Mr. Nixon's proposals are, they require one major addition to which I will now turn.

- 13

inside so that welfare recipients would be financially better off in rural areas. The indirect costs incurred in cities are far greater than those incurred in rural areas, and the difference is great enough to warrant the cost of making rural areas ^{inevitably} attractive to welfare recipients.

~~III~~

The most costly, numerous and most rapidly increasing categories of welfare recipients consists of families without a father. They receive aid to dependent children. They are a category largely called into being, and increased, by the welfare system; and, no doubt, the category in which psychological injury to recipients is most frequent. Mr. Nixon proposes to abolish the financial reward for abandonment --for the creation of such families--which the welfare system hitherto had established. This is sound and overdue. But far more need be done. If Mr. Nixon's proposals become law, a man can still, with impunity, create and abandon a family which the welfare system will have to support. ~~This~~ abandonment, ~~the~~ ~~it~~ would

~~(as in the past)~~

But children ^{would} ~~would~~

no longer increase the income of the abandoned family over what would be available with the father present, would still increase the disposable income of the deserting father, who ~~can~~ ^{has} his family supported by welfare money and ^{can} keep all his job earnings to himself. The incentive to desert, in the knowledge that the family will be provided for by the taxpayers, remains.

Thus, although helpful, Mr. Nixon's proposal will not be enough to stem the tide of abandoned families. Two supplementary measures are needed to serve, one as a positive, the other as a negative means toward the goal of minimizing the creation of fatherless families which depend on welfare. The social cost of such families, of course, goes far beyond the cost of welfare payments. The latter in New York alone involves billions. The trend is ^{WMA} rising.

As a positive incentive, semi-permanent or permanent birthcontrol devices should be made available, free of charge, to all who want them; and a Federal bounty of \$100 should be paid to any woman who accepts an approved, permanent or semi-permanent contraceptive device; the bounty may be paid one-half on acceptance, the second half if the device is still

-75

in place six months later.*

Such bounties have had excellent success in undeveloped countries. They certainly are far cheaper financially--not to speak of human costs--than it is not to pay them. They ought to be available not just to welfare clients but to all fertile women; this might prevent some of them from becoming welfare clients. It would also make the matter politically easier and would not, I think, cost much more: people who are affluent are unlikely to apply for the bounty. The major cost probably is not the bounty but the services of the physicians who insert the device. I think that cost is entirely worthwhile; and far less than the cost of not inducing people to control the birthrate. (Various present health agencies and insurance schemes might be utilized.)

It seems very likely that within a short time semi-permanent devices other than the I.U.D. will be available. I.U.D. are not tolerated by some women and unsuitable for women who have never given birth. While I.U.D.s' could be quite useful, semi-permanent

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Positive incentives never will be enough as long as irresponsible men have no incentive, nothing to gain, from avoiding procreation with irresponsible women. A Federal law is needed ~~to make~~ making it a crime (punishable by between three to five years of detention) for any man to act, intentionally ^{as} or by neglect, so as to risk conception ^{if} (at the time of conception) by reasonable standards, he was not capable, or, (at any time) not willing to support the child (unless he had sufficient reason to believe that the mother was willing and able to do so, by using private means). The penalty should be applied only if a child is born, regardless of life-span, but may be suspended if the defendant supports the child to the court's satisfaction.**

* Needless to say, no conscientious objector need accept or insert such a device. As for objections to the use of tax money for such purposes, I disapprove -- including subsidization of unwanted conceptions. (Note that not preventing conception has not discouraged fornication; preventing conception is unlikely to encourage fornication.)

** Women cannot be held to account without harming the child. Men can.

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Neither the need for nor the morality of such a law requires argument. What about effectiveness? The main objection is that the absconding fathers cannot be found. This has been the case in the past. But they were not seriously sought, since their non-support was not regarded as a serious crime; and it was not a Federal offense. Once it is made a serious Federal crime, a sufficient number of men can be punished to have a deterrent effect. After all, circumstances are such that a witness is necessarily available--which is not the case when burglary or murder is committed. (Applicants for welfare payments should receive such payments only if willing to cooperate in the procedures required for apprehension and conviction of the men who ~~refused to pay for their~~ ^{do not support} ~~effects of their acts.~~ ^{children.}) Punishment may not prevent people from having ^{promiscuous} intercourse, but it can deter from causing conception by neglect, or from refusing to support offspring. Unless Mr. Nixon's proposals are supplemented by the legislation outlined, the steady rise in abandoned families will continue.*

~~Finally, ^{some} attention must be paid to the kind of social workers ~~we are getting from schools of social work.~~ To anyone who has followed the activities of~~

* Other measures--such as decreasing ^{welfare} support payments--tend to hit most the least responsible persons, the children.

(children for child support)

SOME NECESSARY ADDITIONS TO MR. NIXON'S
WELFARE PROPOSALS

I

Mr. Nixon's welfare program is a step in the right direction. It is one step only on a long road; but perhaps it is as big a step as is politically feasible. In the short run, the proposals are likely to ~~decrease~~ⁱⁿ costs; in the longer run they bid fair to reduce it; and there are many advantages over the present system from the viewpoint of equity and economy. ~~There are three important~~^{Let me dwell just on} general virtues in these proposals, ~~(I cannot dwell on many others)~~

1) The 100% tax on earnings of welfare recipients is abolished--they will have some economic incentive to work and earn, and decrease their dependence on welfare payments, by being allowed to retain the first \$60 of their monthly earnings without losing any welfare benefits; only 50% of additional earnings is deducted from welfare payments up to a maximum of . This means that some hardworking families now become eligible, without having to stop working. Employables are helped, and in some cases, required, to seek employment.

2) The Federal government will finance minimum payments of \$1600 yearly per ^{needy} family of four, regardless of location. This will lighten the burden of some states and increase their payments. By making payments a little more equal, it will reduce the tendency of recipients to migrate to the states where benefits are highest, such as New York.

3) Payments for needy families will no longer depend on the absence of a breadwinner. Hence, the incentive to abandonment is reduced.

~~I think~~ all three measures ~~mentioned~~ which I have advocated in the past will help. Experience will lead to modifications, and the law to be enacted should permit some flexibility.

II

The New York welfare bureaucracy bitterly protested the countrywide Federal yearly minimum grants of \$1600 because the states who paid little will get much more Federal money per recipient than the states, such as New York, who paid much more. Which is true. The Federal government proposes not to supplement state payments beyond \$1600, but to pay only up to \$1600. New York would have liked the

Federal government to pay 50% of whatever New York chooses to pay. ¶ The protest demonstrates not only that the protesters are foolish--which is well known--but also that they are uncommonly stupid, which was not.

For Nothing could help the New York welfare system more--nothing could decrease the total New York outlay more--than increases in the payments to welfare recipients in, say, Mississippi. ¶ The New York system is overloaded because New York payments are high a) relative to payments elsewhere, b) relative to job earnings. The system can be helped only by reducing payments in New York, or raising them elsewhere. The first is unlikely to happen to the required degree. The Federal government is doing the second--and the New York welfare establishment complains! Yet the load on New York will be lightened only if people in Mississippi have less reason to migrate to New York--which is the case when the difference in welfare payments is reduced, with Federal help, in Mississippi's favor.

Nothing could be worse for New York than an increase in the Federal subsidy for New York: such an increase might stabilize, or increase, the differential between New York and the states that pay less--i.e., the attraction of New York for welfare recipients elsewhere. It would also tend to increase the size of payments relative to earnings from jobs. That is what the New York welfare establishment is clamoring for. It would be a good way of getting more "clients" to the detriment not only of New York taxpayers, but of the United States economy as a whole, and of the New York economy in particular. Everytime welfare payments are increased, more people become welfare clients --the New York experience demonstrates as much irrefutably. (It is unlikely that people worse than now appointed would be elected, as top administrators of public welfare. Therefore I favor electing commissioners rather than allowing the mayor to appoint them.)

From an economic viewpoint--alas, politically it might be hard to do; but is it really impossible? --it would be best to make Federal payments outside metropolitan centers higher--in purchasing power--than

inside so that welfare recipients would be financially better off in rural areas. The indirect costs incurred in cities are far greater than those incurred in rural areas, and the difference is great enough to warrant the cost of making rural areas ^{irrevocably} attractive to welfare recipients.

III

The most costly, numerous and most rapidly increasing category of welfare recipients consist of families without a father. ^{They} receive aid to dependent children. They are a category largely called into being, and increased, by the welfare system; and, no doubt, the category in which psychological injury to recipients is most frequent. Mr. ~~Nixon~~ proposes to abolish the financial reward for abandonment --for the creation of such families--which the welfare system hitherto had established. This is sound and overdue. But far more need be done. If Mr. Nixon's proposals become law, a man can still, with impunity, create and abandon a family which the welfare system will have to support. ~~This~~ ^A abandonment, ~~though it~~ would

~~(as in the past)~~

no longer increase the income of the abandoned family over what would be available with the father present, ^{or} ^{But absent} ~~ment~~ would still increase the disposable income of the deserting father who ^{has} ~~can have~~ his family supported by welfare money and ^{can} keep all his job earnings to himself. The incentive to desert, in the knowledge that the family will be provided for by the taxpayers, remains.

Thus, although helpful, Mr. Nixon's proposal will not be enough to stem the tide of abandoned families. Two supplementary measures are needed to serve, one as a positive, the other as a negative means toward the goal of minimizing the creation of fatherless families ~~which~~ ^{ing} depend on welfare. The social cost of such families, of course, goes far beyond the cost of welfare payments. The latter in New York alone involves billions. The trend is ^{up.} ~~rising~~

As a positive incentive, semi-permanent or permanent birthcontrol devices should be made available free of charge to all who want them, and a Federal bounty of \$100 should be paid to any woman who accepts an approved, permanent or semi-permanent contraceptive device; the bounty may be paid one-half on acceptance, the second half if the device is still

in place six months later.*

Such bounties have had excellent success in undeveloped countries. They certainly are far cheaper financially--not to speak of human costs--than it is not to pay them. They ought to be available not just to welfare clients but to all fertile women; this might prevent some of them from becoming welfare clients. It would also make the matter politically easier and would not, I think, cost much more: people who are affluent are unlikely to apply for the bounty. The major cost probably is not the bounty but the services of the physicians who insert the device. I think that cost is entirely worthwhile; and far less than the cost of not inducing people to control the birthrate. (Various present health agencies and insurance schemes might be utilized.)

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V

Some "liberals" and some labor leaders ~~_____~~ object ~~_____~~ to Mr. Nixon's job training and job requirement proposals. Liberals argue that mothers of schoolage children should ^{be allowed to} stay home and not be required to take jobs. Since many mothers of schoolage children ~~_____~~ do not receive welfare payments ^{yet} ~~_____~~ do hold jobs, it is not apparent why welfare recipients should be privileged to place the burden of ~~_____~~ providing for their families on society--including these ^{working} ~~_____~~ mothers--if they so choose. Of course, the program requires reasonable and humane administration which takes special circumstances into consideration. I rather fear that the administration will be too lenient. This has been the past experience. ^{Anyway} ~~_____~~ it would certainly be hard to compel an unwilling mother to work. Penalties might affect the children. ~~_____~~ ¶ As to the job training program, the objectors say that it is not training but jobs that are needed; they argue that the government should be the "employer of last resort" hiring anyone who cannot find a job on the market. I am glad Mr. Nixon did not fall for this.

But ^{as belatedly} his obligation will help.

