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ALFRED LEE HENDERSON, Publisher and Editor



What is poverty?

The magnitude of the problem facing the American people is astounding. Figures show that 35 million people are without sufficient food, shelter and clothing. That is one out of every five Americans. Counted by families there were 47 million families, 1/5 of the total number, had income below the \$3,000 annual income poverty level. In 1962 1/6 of our youth, full 20 million youngsters were in the poverty category.

Probably one of the most contested questions these days is the best monetary level to determine whether a person is in the poverty category. The Council of Economic Advisors in 1964 considered as poor a family unit of four persons whose annual income for all sources was less than \$3,000 before taxes and expressed in 1962 prices. To arrive at this figure the Council used a study made by the Social Security Administration setting up a basic economy budget for a city of four at \$3,165.00. So for all practical purposes I will use the \$3,000 figure to determine who is poor. Nevertheless, I will admit that thousands technically live above the poverty level but are surviving on a bare subsistence budget.

And who are the poor? Most of the contemporary poor are non-white families with no breadwinners, families who are run by females or men 14 to 25 or over 65 years. They are also those with less than an eighth grade education, and members of families with more than six children under 18 years of age.

There remains another America besides our prosperous country. In fact it seems like another nation where 9.3 million families try to find shelter, clothes and feed the family, starve of malnutrition and disease, and somehow try to build a better tomorrow on less than \$60 a week. And 2/3 of these family units attempt to get along on less than \$40 a week.

There are 1.5 million persons out of work in the United States, 5% of the total population unemployed. These people swell the ranks of the poverty areas. Of those who are unemployed and poverty stricken only one out of four receives financial assistance from one form of government. In fact they prefer to fend for themselves and reject the gift of a welfare agency. Seven out of every ten mothers on relief in Portland prefer to work for pay instead of staying home at public expense, our research report shows.

What we need in this country in welfare offices is individual attention going beyond the impersonality of a mere welfare state; their problems run too deep to be cured by a panacea. In this country alone 15.6 million occupied dwellings, 27 per cent of the total number of homes are substandard. The personal problems which derive from that fact are vast and astounding: severe cold in winter, intense heat in summer, poor plumbing, no hot and cold water, no oil or gas, paper thin walls which destroy privacy in the slums and which let in the elements on the farm. They are drained of any finances by the landlord and the neighboring merchant. It is very expensive to be poor. Those on the lowest economic scale almost never pay cash, even for the basic necessities.

Everything is bought on credit; so they pay the high cost of installment buying in addition to being subject to higher prices than at stores in more prosperous areas of the city.

The poor also may pay more taxes in proportion to their income than the wealthy. A study of the tax foundation calculates that 28 per cent of the incomes under \$2,000.00 goes for taxes in contrast to 24 per cent of the income of families earning \$10,000 to \$15,000 a year.



To be poor

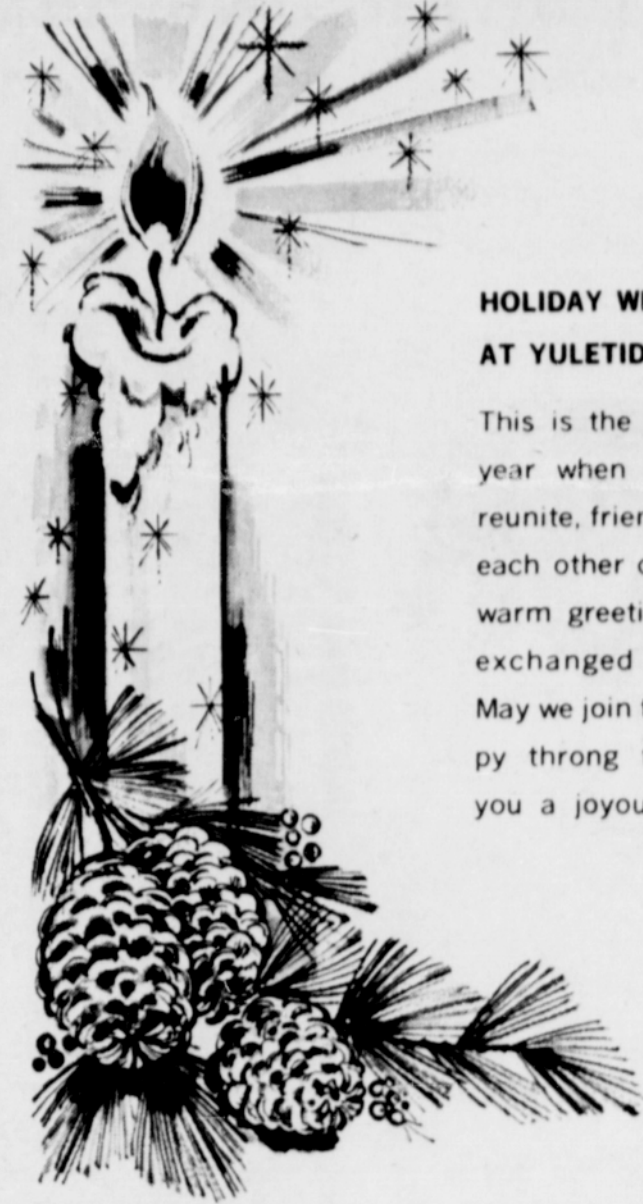
By VERNA L. HENDERSON

During this season when we think of sharing happiness with others, ask yourself the question, what is it like to be poor? The psychiatrists will say: The poor is rigid, suspicious, and have a fatalistic outlook on life. They rarely plan ahead. They are prone to depression, have feelings of futility, lack of belongingness, friendliness, and a lack of trust in others.

Anthropologist Thomas Gladwin describes the life of the poor as dominated by two themes: a sense of powerlessness about events in everyday life (i.e., a sense of failure in the control of the social environment) and a sense of pessimism about the future.

The word "poverty" must also include more than lack of adequate biological maintenance; it must take into account lack of individual fulfillment and unsatisfactory involvement in the larger society. We must reject any theory which might claim poverty to have been caused by evil. People, on the contrary, find themselves in "sick" situations. They do not have a sense of individual fulfillment and do not have a part in society as a whole. Work is one of the vital part in the mainstream of American life, but the poor live in a nation with one of the world is highest rates of unemployment often they find themselves in states and countries without funds for relief or if they do live in otherwise prosperous area, the social worker is hostile toward welfare applicant.

If we can afford to put men on the moon, if we can afford our police activity in foreign countries around the world, WE CAN DO SOMETHING TO HELP THE POOR.



HOLIDAY WISHES AT YULETIDE

This is the time of year when families reunite, friends seek each other out, and warm greetings are exchanged by all. May we join the happy throng to wish you a joyous Noel.

Mr. & Mrs. Willie Jenkins
Mr. & Mrs. George Simmons
Mr. & Mrs. James Lee
Mr. & Mrs. Stanley Cage
Mr. & Mrs. Lewis Winchester
Mr. & Mrs. Lee Hendrix
Mr. & Mrs. W. M. Spencer
Mrs. Betty White
Mrs. Alberta Polk
Mr. & Mrs. Luke Duckett

Mr. & Mrs. Albert Parker
Mr. & Mrs. Henry Scott
Mrs. Evelyn Nelson
Mrs. & Mrs. Manuel Scott
Mrs. & Mr. Joseph Ward
Mr. & Mrs. Carlos Martin
Mr. & Mrs. John T. Blow
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Flowers
Mr. & Mrs. William Taylor
Mrs. Pearl Washington

Mr. & Mrs. Henry Ellison

Christmas of 1970

A message from
Governor Tom McCall



In the cold of deepest winter - before the earth tilts its axis once again toward the sun - mankind for centuries has prayed by fire and starlight to the God of his Destiny.

All of man's religions have felt the holy tremble of mid-winter and have responded to it with immortal longings.

On Christmas, 1970, those of the Christian faith celebrate the birth of Christ, and the message of hope and glory which was born with Him in Bethlehem.

But Christian prayers are only part of the human chorus that calls to God for mercy and rebirth during this darkest time and longest night.

On Christmas, 1970, I think we can all join in a song of prayer:

asking mercy on us for the terrible mistakes we have made;

asking rebirth for the dream of human dignity;

asking mercy for the men who are bound in the chains of war;

asking rebirth for the ways of peace;

asking mercy for the millions who are hungry and homeless and afflicted;

asking rebirth for the millions who perceive misery but turn away.

And, above all, can we not join in one great voice, imploring that love and trust may yet rule the world and that the sovereignty of the Meek will come at last?

If we are men of good will and compassion, no barrier can keep us from joining to build the kingdom that haunts our winter dreams. To that, can we not say:

Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and Amen.

Tom McCall
Governor of Oregon

Happy Holidays From all the Folks at
Harder Mechanical Contractors

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