

Foreword

This pamphlet was first published in 1973 in the Nixon era, and revised to bring it up to date in 1980. That was before the Reagan program of slashes in welfare and handouts to the rich had even begun. The ugly picture I have presented in the following pages makes even the bad Carter years look like "the good old days."

Unemployment has now topped 8.5 million, while inflation is still soaring. The budget-cut bill, signed by both Republicans and Democrats, is the size of the Manhattan telephone directory. Most members of Congress had not read it at the time they voted for it, but they are contemplating still further cuts that will affect millions of the poorest people in the United States.

The direct blows from the first cuts are only now being felt. One million have been thrown off welfare entirely; 1.5 million have lost the food stamps that kept them from starvation; subsidized housing construction will be cut by one-third, and rent for that housing will go up to 30 percent of the tenant's income; free school lunches have also been cut by 30 percent. (President Reagan, in defending the cut, argued that the children would be getting a vegetable—*ketchup*!) At least one million college students have lost access to loans. The elderly face three more years of work before they can retire with full benefits, and the \$122 a month minimum for Social Security will hold only for those now receiving it. In the future those who worked for the lowest wages will be