

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 17, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR

HONORABLE ELLIOT L. RICHARDSON
SECRETARY OF HEALTH, EDUCATION,
AND WELFARE

One point Congress has indeed scored on us during the Family Assistance hearings is that in truth we have little information about the effects of welfare on its recipients, especially in areas such as family stability. I am sure we are right in our assumptions, but there is in fact scant research data to support us.

No accident. Over the years the welfare bureaucracy in HEW and elsewhere has devoted wholly disproportionate efforts to seeing that no such research was done. This comes under the heading of protecting the good name of your clients. The Children's Bureau was for long a center of such efforts. Self-satisfied ladies drew full professors incomes over a lifetime of ease devoted singlemindedly to seeing that anyone who suggested that welfare might cause problems for children quickly became a sadder if wiser man. (If that sounds personal, it is.)

Some changes seem to have been made, however. I have been in touch with Dr. Charles P. Gershenson who is head of Research and Evaluation there. He has given me some very helpful material, of which the most important is the enclosed memo. Table E shows a precise and unmistakable lowering of Educational Aspirations among youth with prolonged exposure to AFDC. It is the only hard data I have ever seen on the subject.

Daniel P. Moynihan
Counsellor to the President

Attachment - **cy ltr from Dr. Gershenson to Dr Moynihan, 9 Jul 70, attaching memo from E. V. Mech to Chas. Gershenson, 6 Jul 70, subject "HEW Welfare Youth Study"**

DPM/crm

bcc: Bill Kristol