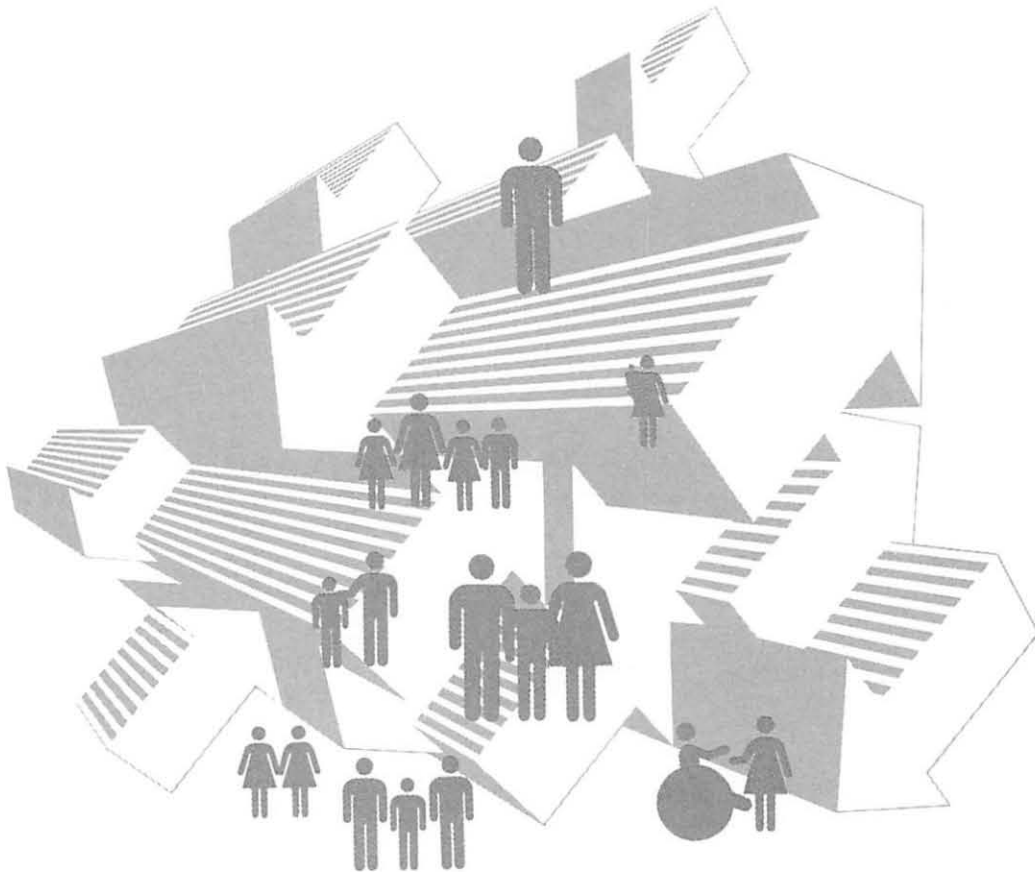


The Factual Context For This Study



American Families

California Families

County Families



THE FACTUAL CONTEXT FOR THIS STUDY

AMERICAN FAMILIES

Introduction

Los Angeles families are, of course, American families. They face many of the same problems and share many of the characteristics of families throughout the nation. An overview of the experiences and concerns of American families is a useful backdrop to a study focused more exclusively on Los Angeles.

If one were to attach a topical theme to the 1980s, "The Decade of the Changing Family" would certainly fit. Research and dialogue concerning this transformation have occurred in all quarters. The decade was ushered in with a "White House Conference on Families." The family has been studied by public opinion pollsters such as George Gallup and Louis Harris. Administrators have conducted national conferences trying to understand demographic trends.¹ Ethnic organizations have examined ways to address their communities' problems by strengthening families.²

The family, as an American institution, has been caught in a political tug-of-war — with both major parties pulling strenuously from each end. In the politics of the family, participants seem to be either advocates or critics. The approach of this report, however, is based on the proposition that effective problem-solving is enhanced by recognizing what is happening in the real world. The national studies reviewed by the Task Force help to establish this factual context of reality.

White House Conference on Families

Official America has lost touch with family America. . . . Where government is helpful to families, let it be strengthened. Where government is harmful to families, let it be changed.

— President Jimmy Carter
White House Conference on Families
Baltimore, Maryland
June 5, 1980

In January 1979, President Jimmy Carter announced the formation of the White House Conference on Families — a two-year process involving three regional conferences attended by more than 2,000 delegates representing every state in the nation. The Conference culminated its work in October, 1980, by publishing its Report to "The President, Congress and Families of the Nation."³

The main purpose of the White House Conference was to examine the strengths of American families, the difficulties they face, and the ways in which family life is affected by public policies and private institutions.⁴ The delegates to the regional conferences discussed and debated issues and proposals reflecting six different themes.⁵

Family Strengths and Supports. Families are the oldest, most fundamental human institution. Families serve as a source of strength and support for their members and our society.

Diversity of Families. American families are pluralistic in nature. Any discussion of issues must reflect an understanding and respect of

cultural, ethnic and religious differences as well as differences in structure and lifestyles.

The Changing Realities of Family Life. American society is dynamic, constantly changing. The roles and structure of families and individual family members are growing, adapting and evolving in new and different ways.

The Impact of Public and Private Institutional Policies. The policies of government and major private institutions have profound effects on families. Increasing sensitivity to the needs of families is required, as well as ongoing action and research on the specific nature of the impact of public and private institutional policies.

The Impact of Discrimination. Many families are exposed to discrimination. This affects individual family members as well as the family unit as a whole.

Families with Special Needs. The needs of families with disabled members, single-parent families, elderly families, and others with special needs must be examined as important parts of the whole.

The delegates came from every state and U.S. territory and from nearly every walk of life. Almost 1,600 of the delegates were chosen at the state level, 310 were appointed at large, 55 were state coordinators and 40 were members of a National Advisory Committee. State delegates were nominated through both peer and gubernatorial selection. Over 100,000 persons participated in the process of selecting state delegates.

The delegates met in Baltimore, Minneapolis, and Los Angeles to discuss and produce a comprehensive set of recommendations. These regional conferences sifted through 5,000 state recommendations, testimony from seven national hearings, and the results of a Gallup Poll conducted specifically for the Conference.

Thirty-four recommendations were adopted by a majority of delegates at all three conferences. Fifteen recommendations were adopted by a majority of delegates at two conferences. Another 23 recommendations were adopted by a majority of delegates at one conference.

The final working session of delegates occurred in August 1980, when about 115 members of the National Task Force met in Washington, D.C., to summarize Conference recommendations and to identify strategies for their implementation. The Task Force consisted of an elected representative of each of the 55 state and territorial delegations, 22 appointed delegates, and the 40 members of the National Advisory Committee.

The multitude of issues represented by the adopted recommendations are not dissimilar to those addressed in this report. It has become clear, however, that while the national model may provide leadership and direction, a local approach to issue identification and problem-solving is also necessary in order to achieve effective results.

Some Recommendations Adopted by All Three Conferences

Subject	Percent Approved
Employment:	
* implement flextime, better leave policies	92.7%
* combat employment discrimination	83.0%

Some Recommendations Adopted by All Three Conferences, continued

Subject	Percent Approved
Alcohol and Drug Abuse:	
* more education and media initiatives to prevent substance abuse	92.7%
Taxation:	
* eliminate marriage tax penalty; revise inheritance taxes	92.1%
* encourage home care of elderly and disabled persons	92.0%
Family Impact Analysis:	
* a call for systematic analysis of all laws, regulations, and rules for their impact on families	90.4%
Disabled:	
* efforts to increase public sensitivity toward the disabled	90.1%
* enforce existing laws designed to assist disabled persons	89.8%
Homemakers:	
* more equitable treatment of full-time homemakers (social security changes, displaced homemakers, etc.)	87.4%
Family Violence:	
* support family violence prevention efforts and services	82.0%
Child Care:	
* promote more child care choices	79.0%
* increased child care funding	76.6%
Education:	
* increased family life education	74.8%
Housing:	
* more tax incentives for housing	78.3%
* increased housing subsidies	72.8%
* improved fair housing laws	69.7%
Teenage Pregnancy:	
* increase efforts to prevent and deal with adolescent pregnancy	77.9%
Media:	
* reduce violence, sex, stereotypes	83.4%

Some of the proposals not adopted by a majority of delegates at all three conferences are also noteworthy.

Thirteen states made recommendations on how the family should be defined. West Virginia proposed: "A family consists of a person or group of persons who are related by blood, marriage, adoption, or legal custody." Arkansas, Oklahoma, Washington, and Iowa recommended: "Government should not redefine the legal term of family to include homosexual marriage." California, the District of Columbia, and Maryland proposed legal recognition of nontraditional family forms.

The regional conference held in Maryland adopted a resolution by a slim, one-vote margin (292 to 291) calling for institution of government policies to preserve the basic legal rights of all family members, without discrimination on the basis of sex, race, ethnic origin, creed, socio-

economic status, age, disability, diversity of family type and size, sexual preference or biological ties. This so-called "alternative" family proposal did not secure majority votes at the other two regional conferences.

Regional differences also precluded national agreement on a definition of "family" and some other more controversial topics.

Gallup Poll: "American Families — 1980"

Any belief that Americans do not place top priority on the family and family life is completely refuted by results of this survey. The findings represent a ringing endorsement of the importance of the family in American life.

— Dr. George Gallup, Jr.
Gallup Organization

In 1980, the Gallup Organization conducted in-person interviews with 1,500 adults in more than 300 locations across the nation. It was then the most comprehensive survey ever directed at families.⁶ The Gallup survey was commissioned by the White House Conference on Families and was funded by outside sources.⁷

The survey showed that nine out of ten persons questioned were either very satisfied or mostly satisfied with their family life. A clear majority — 61 percent — believed their families were the most important element in their lives.

A majority of respondents supported:⁸

- * better job benefits (flextime, family sick leave, etc.)
- * direct government funding of day care centers
- * tax credits to businesses providing child care
- * sex education in the schools
- * public school courses on alcohol and drug abuse
- * tax credits for families with disabled members
- * in-home health services for the elderly
- * more consideration for families in tax and housing laws

A solid majority — 60% — cited alcohol and drug abuse among the three things they thought were most harmful to family life. Forty percent cited a decline in religious and moral values; 29% placed poverty in this category.

The recommendations ultimately adopted by the three White House Conferences quite closely matched the results of the Gallup survey.⁹

Data from the Census Bureau

The results of the 1980 census dispelled the stereotype of the American family as a monolithic social institution. Instead, the census figures revealed substantial changes in family living during the 1970s.¹⁰ They also disclosed national patterns in marriage, birth, and household composition.

Single-Parent Households.¹¹ The number of minors living with only one parent has increased sharply, from 11.9% of the nation's households in 1970 to 19.7% in 1980, mainly because of higher rates of divorce, separation, and adolescent pregnancy. Of children under 18

living with only one parent, 92% lived with their mothers, who were usually divorced or separated. The number of children living with a single father represented only 1.7% of all children.

One-Person Households.¹² The number of one-person households increased by 64%, from 10.9 million in 1970 to 17.8 million in 1980. About 23% of the nation's households in 1980 consisted of just one person. Reasons for the increase in people living alone included: delayed marriage age, a rise in Americans' affluence, and a reduced tendency for single, older persons to move in with their families. Of those living alone, most were female — 11 million women compared to 6.8 million men. The women tended to be widowed or elderly, while the men tended to be young and never married. The number of divorced persons living alone more than doubled during the 1970s, to 3.4 million.

Unmarried Couples.¹³ The significant increase in the number of unmarried couples living together — from 523,000 in 1970 to 1.56 million in 1980 — was attributed to a change of behavior among the young and a greater societal acceptance of new living arrangements. More recent census figures show that as of 1986 there are more than 2.2 million unmarried-couple households and that about 4.1% of all cohabiting couples in the nation are unwed.

Divorce and Marriage.¹⁴ The age at which people marry continued to rise. The median age at first marriage for women rose from 20.8 years to 22.1 years during the 1970s, while the age for men rose from 23.2 to 24.6. Divorce continued to increase. The ratio of divorced persons per 1,000 married persons living with spouses more than doubled — from 47 per 1,000 in 1970 to 100 per 1,000 in 1980.

Out-of-Wedlock Births.¹⁵ Out-of-wedlock births increased 50% between 1970 and 1980. In 1970, 10.7% of all births were to unwed mothers. In 1980, the figure had jumped to 17% of all births. Statistics showed marked differences along racial and ethnic lines.

Average Household Size.¹⁶ As of July 1, 1986, the typical American household included only 2.67 people. The average was 2.76 in 1980. The average American household included 5.04 people in 1880, 4.93 in 1890, 4.76 at the turn of the century, slipping drastically to 3.33 by 1964. The major reason cited for this decline in household size is the fact that America is aging. About 75% of the drop in household size is in the under-18 age group.

Statistics from the Bureau of Justice

Last year, 1 in 4 American households experienced a rape, robbery, assault, burglary, or theft. Although this finding reflects the high level of crime in the United States, it is well below the almost 1 in 3 households touched by crime a decade ago.

— Steven R. Schlesinger
Director,
U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics
June, 1987

One of the most important concerns of families and households throughout the nation is the problem of crime. A National Crime Survey is conducted annually by the United States Department of Justice,

Bureau of Justice Statistics. Each year since 1980, the Bureau has published a bulletin entitled "Households Touched by Crime."¹⁷

In 1986, households with high incomes, households in urban areas, and Black households were more vulnerable to crime in general than others, although low-income households were more vulnerable to crimes of high concern.¹⁸ During 1986, 27% of Black households, 28% of households with incomes over \$25,000, and 29% of urban households were touched by crime.

Regional differences are apparent. Households in the West were the most vulnerable (30%). Those in the Northeast were the least vulnerable (19%). About 25% of households in the Midwest and South were touched by crime in 1986.

A higher percentage of Black households than White or other minority race households (Asians, Pacific Islanders, and Native Americans) were touched by crime in 1986. Other minority race households were less vulnerable than Black households to the crime of burglary.

Latino households were also particularly vulnerable to crime in 1986, especially robbery, burglary, household theft, and motor vehicle theft.

The Bureau attributed the overall decrease in crime in the past decade to demographic shifts: fewer people per household and household moves from urban to suburban and rural locations.

Philip Morris Family Survey: American Families in 1987

The major finding of this first Phillip Morris Family Survey is that the American family is healthy and resilient. Eight out of 10 American families feel things are going well for them. Family bonds run deep; the vast majority of marriages are thriving. The basic outlook for the family is bright, although there are some disturbing signs of trouble. One in five American families shows real signs of despair. Particularly affected are families headed by single women, divorced parents, and other minorities. Their problems are primarily economic, which often is the cause of family break-ups and other dislocations.

— Hamish Maxwell
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
Philip Morris Companies Inc.
April, 1987

The first Philip Morris Family Survey was conducted for Philip Morris Companies Inc. by Louis Harris and Associates Inc. during February and March, 1987. Over 3,000 members of families were interviewed by telephone. This cross-section consisted of individuals 18 years of age and older and family units of two or more people related by blood, marriage, or adoption or living together as a couple.

An overwhelming 91% of those families surveyed indicated that if things were different for them and they did not have a family, they would miss their family "very much" or "quite a lot."

However, a significant 20% of the families were not satisfied with important aspects of their lives. Dissatisfaction was heavily concentrated in families of unskilled blue-collar and white-collar workers and

low-income families, a great many of whom are Black and Latino.

“The major impact upon satisfaction in family life, without any doubt, is economic status,” remarked Louis Harris, who conducted the research for the survey. “In other words, money doesn’t necessarily buy family happiness, but it makes it a great deal more possible to find it.”¹⁹

A sizeable number of families headed by single women (37%) were dissatisfied with their housing conditions, as were many of those under 30 years old (33%), many Black families (33%), and a considerable number of Latino families (28%).

Among those dissatisfied with their ability to pay for essentials were 46 percent of single female, 42 percent of Black, and 32 percent of Latino households.

Although an overall majority of parents hope their children will lead a lifestyle much like their own (65% to 33%), there are identifiable groups who do not. Half or more of Blacks, single women, and families earning less than \$15,000 per year want a better lifestyle for their children.

A 65% majority of all families stated that with proper day care centers, preschool programs, and housekeepers, both parents can work outside the home. The same percentage of families feel that a mother should not have to stay home and raise children.

The survey revealed that a bare majority (50% to 47%) are satisfied with the political leadership in the United States. A majority are dissatisfied with the economic outlook for the country (54% to 44%). A 55% to 40% majority expressed dissatisfaction with the kind of world their children will inherit.

The survey also presented the following factual profile of various “prototype” families.²⁰

Married Couples. More than two-thirds (76%) of family units consist of people who are married. Of these, 58% have been married only once, while 18% were previously married.

Dual-Career Couples. Both spouses work in 45% of family units. These families are concentrated in the 21 to 49 age group. They are likely to be dissatisfied with their jobs and homes. Even making more money, they do not feel they have the time to develop a satisfactory lifestyle.

Unmarried Couples. Unmarried couples comprise 6% of family units. These couples tend to live in cities and suburbs, are generally in the 21 to 29 age group (63%), and are found in higher percentages among Blacks and Latinos than among Whites. In most live-in situations, both partners tend to work (67%) and they have between two and three children who are under 6 years old.

Families Headed by Single Females. Families headed by single females account for 11% of all family units. They tend to be located in cities. Twenty-one percent are Black and 7% Latino. Of these families, 43% are at or below the poverty level and are dissatisfied with their economic conditions, housing, and jobs; 43% are divorced or separated; 51% have children 12 to 16 years of age; 43% have children aged 6 to 11.

Parents’ Concerns for Their Children. Parents with children under 18 years of age living in their household, when asked to choose

from a list of concerns that most worried them about their children, ranked the illicit use of drugs as their first concern (58%), use of alcohol as the second concern (22%) and sexual promiscuity as the third greatest area of concern. (14%).

Most parents would first turn to other family members for help in managing to raise children (62%). Next in order they would seek help from their minister, priest or rabbi (26%) or their child’s teacher (24%).

Families and American Politics

I am indebted to Nicholas Eberstat for the observation that “liberals” emphasize social policy but are criticized for ignoring values. “Conservatives” emphasize value in the outcomes for children but seem threatened by the idea of social policy. Surely each group is seeing part of the truth and can find common ground in accepting one another’s perceptions.

— Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan
In *Family and Nation*
(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1986)

As the only person in United States history to serve in four successive administrations (Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, and Ford), Daniel Patrick Moynihan possesses unique credentials to give an overview of family policy in the United States government during that period. Moynihan believes that governments can’t avoid influencing family relationships. America’s choice is whether its policies “will be purposeful, intended policies, or residual, derivative, in a sense concealed ones,” he explains in his recent book, *Family and Nation*.

Liberals and conservatives, Democrats and Republicans are now all laying claim to “family issues” in American politics. Republicans have taken the “pro-family” approach for years; a recent policy paper drawn up by the Democratic Party’s Policy Commission, under the auspices of the party’s national committee, puts “strengthening the family” at the top of its list of priorities.²¹ Calling her bill “pro family” and a challenge to Republicans,²² Democratic Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder of Colorado co-sponsored a proposal that would require employers to give workers 18 weeks of unpaid leave to take care of a newborn baby, a newly adopted baby, or a seriously ill child or parent. The tug-of-war over the “family” goes on.

Some conservatives are not taking kindly to liberals joining the pro-family bandwagon. Alan Carlson, the president of the Rockford Institute, a think tank oriented to social conservatism, has expressed concern that liberals, by linking pro-family concerns with feminist concerns may achieve some goals that are precisely opposed to the conservative agenda.²³

About a year ago, the liberal/conservative fight over “the family” erupted when a proposed White House family report was released to the press before receiving President Reagan’s imprimatur.²⁴ The report was the brainchild of then- Undersecretary of Education Gary Bauer. Bauer is now the President’s chief domestic policy advisor.

The report was the product of the Working Group on the Family, made up of top-level members of President Reagan’s administrative bureaucracy, including five White House aides and representatives from

several federal agencies and departments: Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Justice, Interior, Labor, Treasury, ACTION, and Office of Management and Budget.

The report applauded the recent Supreme Court decision upholding Georgia's authority to criminalize certain forms of consenting adult behavior, even in the privacy of the bedroom. It also charged that the "fabric of family life has been frayed by the abrasive experiments of two liberal decades" and urged cutting off welfare benefits to unwed mothers under age 21 who do not live with their parents.

The report urged the President to direct all federal agencies to file statements showing not only how their proposed policies would improve economic conditions but also to what extent those policies keep families "intact." Bauer called this recommendation possibly the most important in the report, adding that it "would institutionalize family concern in the public policy-making process and, indeed, that is a very important thing to do."²⁵

Congressman Augustus Hawkins (D-Calif.) criticized the report's lack of research, calling it, "simply an endorsement of the conservative agenda of the Heritage Foundation."²⁶

The editorial board of the *Los Angeles Times* responded swiftly to the report, comparing Bauer's 7-month project and its recommendations with suggestions made by the nation's Roman Catholic bishops in a pastoral letter — six years in the making — entitled "Economic Justice for All."²⁷ The editorial praised the bishop's report "with its commitment to the poor" and criticized much of the Bauer report for "pursuing with ideological zeal a new attack on the fabric of the safety net that has been constructed for the nation's disadvantaged." The editorial did support Bauer's proposal calling for the issuance by federal agencies of family impact statements when new policies are created.

The editor of the *Atlanta Constitution* criticized both the Bauer report's recommendation that states repeal their no-fault divorce laws and its proposal to scrap tax credits that working women may claim for child care costs.²⁸

So far, President Reagan specifically has endorsed only that portion of the Bauer report which recommends that federal agencies file family impact reports when they adopt new regulations or programs. His endorsement came in the form of an executive order requiring the federal officials to assess all federal programs, including welfare, housing, and education, for their impact on families.²⁹

Anthropology of Changing Families

If we define the nuclear family as a working husband, housekeeping wife, and two children, and ask how many Americans actually still live in this type of family, the answer is astonishing: 7 percent of the total United States population.

— Alvin Toffler
Author, *The Third Wave*
(1980)

There was a time when extended families, often consisting of three or four generations of blood relatives living with others in the same

household, were a dominant family form in America. Alvin Toffler refers to this historical period as "The First Wave."³⁰

At the turn of the century, most children in America were raised in nuclear families. Nuclear families consisted of households with two or more children and two parents — a stay-at-home mother and a go-to-work father — who remained together throughout their lives. This domestic arrangement was well adapted to the needs of America's industrial manufacturing economy, creating an ample supply of male factory workers.³¹ Toffler refers to the period when the nuclear family was the social norm as "The Second Wave."

Today, the industrial manufacturing economy has been transformed to an industrial information-and-service economy that has employed nearly two-thirds of the workforce.³² In addition, America's families have shifted away from the two-parent, multi-child, male-wage-earner family, and toward alternative forms of domestic and sexual arrangements.³³ Toffler refers to the diversification of American family relationships as the beginning of "The Third Wave."

"Serial monogamy" now is competing with lifelong same-partner monogamy as a marital norm for American couples. Whether one-out-of-three marriages ends in divorce as some experts claim³⁴ or whether only one-in-eight marriages dissolve, as other contend,³⁵ "till death do us part" does not carry the same weight as it once did as a marital commitment. In any event, it seems that about one-fifth of all marriages are now remarriages.³⁶

Further, more and more children are being raised in the fastest-growing family form in America — 80% more common in the 1980s than in 1960s — the one-parent, usually female-headed family.³⁷

A central feature of the traditional nuclear family pattern was the stay-at-home mother. Today, even when a child lives with both parents, neither of them is likely to be a full-time homemaker. Dual-career families account for 45% of family households in America.³⁸ The number of working mothers with children under 18 rose drastically from 10% in 1940, to 30% in 1960, to 55% in 1980.³⁹ In addition to divorce and a corresponding number of single-parent households, economic pressures on the "dwindling middle class" are cited as reasons for more parents entering the workforce. As one economist put it, many two-parent households need a second income "just to preserve their economic status, not to improve it."⁴⁰

Addressing the ongoing changes in form experienced by American families over the past few decades, and referring to families of the 21st Century as "The Third Wave" families, Alvin Toffler has written:

Behind all of this confusion and turmoil, a new third wave family system is coalescing based on a diversity of family forms and more varied individual roles. This demassification of the family opens many new personal options. Third wave civilization will not try to stuff everyone willy-nilly into a single family form. For this reason, the emerging family system could free each of us to find his or her own niche, to select or create a family style attuned to individual needs. But before anyone can perform a celebratory dance, the agonies of transition must be dealt with. Caught in the crackup of the old with the new system not yet in place, millions find the high level of

diversity bewildering rather than helpful. Instead of being liberated, they suffer from overchoice, and are wounded, embittered, plunged into a sorrow and loneliness intensified by the multiplicity of their choices and options. To make the new diversity work for us instead of against us, we will need to make many changes on many levels at once, from morality and taxes to employment practices.⁴¹

As a whole, Americans have not yet developed the ethic of tolerance for diversity that a demassified society both requires and engenders. Having been taught that one kind of family is "normal" and others are suspect or deviant, vast numbers of Americans remain intolerant of the new variety of family styles. The more rapidly Americans can adopt an attitude of tolerance for diversity in lifestyles, the sooner America's lawmakers and administrators can bridge the gap between policies based solely on old models and present facts. The future of America's families depends on these transitions in attitudes and policies.

Again, the first step is education, that is, providing the informational context in which acknowledgment of the reality of the diversity of families is possible. That process of education is the earnest objective of this report.

AMERICAN FAMILIES: RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Task Force recommends that a White House Conference on Families be convened by the next President of the United States. The procedures employed, both in selecting delegates and in conducting the conference, should be similar to those used during the 1980 White House Conference on Families. The conference should be announced in 1990, with three regional conferences conducted in the summer of 1991. Along with findings and recommendations, a final report should incorporate pertinent family and household demographics that emerge from the 1990 Census. The report should be issued to the President, Congress, and the American people by December 1991, thus providing a sound factual basis for policies and programs affecting American families during this century's remaining decade.

2. The Task Force recommends that a National Conference on Family Diversity be held in Los Angeles in 1990, hosted by the City of Los Angeles. The Mayor and the City Council should invite the National Conference of Mayors and the National League of Cities to co-sponsor the conference. The conference would provide an opportunity for chief executives, administrators, and lawmakers from cities across the nation to share ideas and develop strategies — from a municipal perspective — in a responsible effort to meet the challenges posed by ever-changing family demographics and concerns.

3. The Task Force recommends that the United States Conference of Mayors sponsor a "Family Diversity Forum" at its next annual meeting. The Conference should encourage mayors across the country to convene family diversity task forces to study changing family demographics and to make recommendations to local government on ways to help improve the quality of life for families in their own jurisdictions.

4. The Task Force recommends that the National League of Cities sponsor a "Family Diversity Forum" at its next annual meeting. The League should encourage participating cities to develop mechanisms to review changing family trends and issues.

American Families: Notes

¹ "The Changing Family," National Invitational Conference, October 21-23, 1987, Seattle, Washington. Sponsored by American Public Welfare Association.

² "Ethnic Bonds Called Key to Latino Family," *Los Angeles Times*, July 13, 1987; 11th Annual Conference of the National Council of La Raza.

³ "Listening to America's Families: Action for the 80s," *The Report of the White House Conference on Families*. (1980), hereinafter "Conference Report."

⁴ *Id.*, p. 130.

⁵ *Id.*, p. 133.

⁶ The Gallup survey was made possible by grants from American Research, Inc., the van Ameringen Foundation, the George Grund Foundation, the W.T. Grant Foundation, and the National Council on Family Relations.

⁷ Conference Report, above, p. 180.

⁸ *Id.*, p. 181.

⁹ *Id.*, p. 183.

¹⁰ Nelson, B., "1970s the 'We Decade' for Single Couples," *Los Angeles Times*, October 26, 1981.

¹¹ "Marital Status and Living Arrangements: March, 1980" United States Census Bureau, October 1981.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Los Angeles Times*, October 26, 1981

¹⁶ *Los Angeles Times*, April 15, 1987

¹⁷ Over 100,000 people representing 49,000 households are interviewed twice a year. A "household" refers to a dwelling unit (usually an apartment or house) and its occupants. A household is considered "touched by crime" if during the year it experienced a burglary, auto theft, or household theft, or if a household member was raped, robbed, or assaulted or was the victim of a personal theft, no matter where the crime occurred. These offenses include both attempted and completed crimes.

¹⁸ "Crimes of high concern" is a term referring to burglary or violent crimes (rape, robbery, or assault).

¹⁹ "The Economics of Family Happiness," publicity packet released with *The Philip Morris Family Survey*.

²⁰ This survey defines "family unit" as two or more people living together who are related by blood, marriage, adoption, or who are living together as a couple. By definition, therefore, the results of this survey are not reflective of "household" demographics, which also include one-person households.

²¹ Dionne Jr., E.J., "Family and Ethics are Bywords in '86 Races," *New York Times*, September 28, 1986.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *The Family: Preserving America's Future*, A Report of the Working Group on the Family, November 1986.

²⁵ May, Lee, "Panel Asks Curbs in Unwed Mothers' Aid," *Los Angeles Times*, November 14, 1986.

²⁶ "Family Task Force Criticizes Courts for 'Liberal' Rulings," *The Los Angeles Daily Journal*, November 14, 1986.

²⁷ "Two Views of Poverty," *Los Angeles Times*, November 17, 1986.

²⁸ Teepen, Tom, "Reagan's Voodoo Sociology," *Los Angeles Daily Journal*, November 19, 1986.

²⁹ May, Lee, "Federal Programs Must Assess Impact on Families," *Los*

Angeles Times, September 4, 1987.

³⁰ Toffler, Alvin, *The Third Wave* (1980).

³¹ Harris, Marvin, "Growing Conservatism? Not In Family Patterns," *Los Angeles Times*, December 23, 1981.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *The Phillip Morris Family Survey*, April, 1987.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Harris, *supra*.

³⁸ Philip Morris Survey, *supra*.

³⁹ Harris, *supra*.

⁴⁰ Shilling, A. Gary, "America's Dwindling Middle Class," *Los Angeles Times*, May 26, 1987.

⁴¹ Toffler, *supra*.

CALIFORNIA FAMILIES

Introduction

California families share characteristics with other American families, although Californians are a more diverse lot than Americans are nationally.

Traditionally, family law has been a matter of state, rather than federal or municipal, regulation.¹ Therefore, many decisions affecting Los Angeles families are political and are made in Sacramento.

Los Angeles families are also part of a larger network of California families whose domestic concerns are primarily governed by state policies and programs. Therefore, a review of information on family issues from a statewide perspective is crucial to the study of Los Angeles families.

Throughout the 1980s, Californians have been examining changing family demographics, definitions, and issues. The California Task Force on Families, organized under the auspices of the state's Health and Welfare Agency, issued a report to the Western Regional White House Conference on Families in April, 1980.² The California Census Data Center reviewed 1980 census information from a statewide perspective.³ Friends of Families, a coalition of northern California religious, labor, political, and service-oriented organizations, founded by Oakland Councilman Wilson Riles, Jr., issued a "Bill of Rights for Families" in 1982. The Governor's Commission on Personal Privacy studied family relationships in California and issued its report in December, 1982.⁴ The state's Employment Development Department analyzed socio-economic trends in California.⁵

The California Legislature also turned its attention to family issues. In April, 1987, the state Assembly held hearings on "The Changing Family."⁶ The state Senate initiated a number of family-oriented research projects and released its findings in a series of reports published in 1987.⁷

The subject of family diversity is the common denominator of these state studies and reports. They reveal that to tap a most valuable resource, the state must recognize, embrace, and nurture the rich diversity of its people and their most basic institution, the family.

California Task Force on Families

It should be the policy of the government and all private institutions to accept diversity as a source of strength in family life which must be considered in planning policy and programs.

— California Task Force on Families
Report, April, 1980

The California Task Force on Families was convened in 1979 as a part of the White House Conference on Families. After holding 12 public hearings throughout the state and after reviewing materials submitted by local committees, the state task force published a report to which nearly 2,000 Californians contributed.⁸

The report identified as important areas of concern to California families. Its general goals are consistent with the mandate of the Task

Force on Family Diversity: identifying ways to improve the quality of life for Los Angeles families. Local lawmakers and administrators should be aware of these goals and should keep them in mind when adopting ordinances, passing resolutions, or determining how to implement programs affecting families living in the City of Los Angeles.

GOALS OF THE STATE TASK FORCE ON FAMILIES

Pluralism: Encourage cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and religious pluralism for the purpose of opposing discrimination and racism.

Public Policy: Require a "family impact analysis" prior to implementation of new laws, regulations, or programs.

Housing: Ensure affordable and safe housing; stop discrimination because of age, location, disability, sexual orientation, or family size.

Recreation: Improve and develop local recreational facilities.

Taxation: Create a pro-family federal tax structure by providing credits for dependent care, e.g., care of children, elderly, and disabled.

Employment: Encourage public and private employers to develop assistance programs for unemployed; adopt flexible work schedules.

Violence: Develop more prevention, intervention, and treatment programs, and services such as child care, respite care, etc.

Schools: Improve family life education programs; revise social science curricula to accurately reflect diversity and historic contributions of ethnic minorities, women, gays, and other groups who have been negatively portrayed or eliminated from historic documentation.

Health: Ensure mental health services are available to all families in stress; ensure adequate health care for all, regardless of location, language, ethnic background or income; have more sensitive alcohol and drug prevention and treatment programs.

Foster Care: Discourage separation of families; encourage reunification of families; arrange permanent placement in other situations.

Immigration: Ensure that immigration policies stress efforts toward family reunification, making family unity the number one priority.

Media: Encourage media to more effectively assist families in making consumer decisions; encourage more responsible programming, i.e., programming that accurately portrays ethnic and social groups, and contributes toward integration, and respect for social diversity.

State Census Trend Analysis

There was a spectacular decline in the importance of the traditional family unit (couples with children) since 1950, dropping from 54% of all households to 28% in 1980.

— *Socio-Economic Trends in California*
Employment Development Department
Report, 1986

Census data can provide policy shapers with valuable information about family life in California. Sometimes, of course, census figures tell the obvious. Other times, however, they reveal subtle and distinct changes which have profound implications on public policy decisions.

Information compiled by the Census Data Center of the Southern California Association of Governments conveys the following facts about California families as they were constituted in 1980.⁹

One-Person Households. People living alone made up 24.6% of all California households. This was in contrast to the national average of 22.7% of all households.

Single-Parent Families. In California, 22.3% of families with children were maintained by a single parent, second only to New York as highest state in the nation on this score. The national average was 19.1%.

Education Level. Almost 75% of Californians over the age of 25 were high school graduates, ranking California 10th highest in the nation. About 20% of California adults had four years of college or more.

Language at Home. A language other than English was spoken in nearly one-fourth of California households. This contrasts with the national average of 10%.

Housing. In California, more than 55% of housing units were owner-occupied. The national figure was 64.4% owner-occupied. Housing units are slightly newer and slightly smaller than in the rest of the nation.

Families of Color.¹⁰ The number of California's racial and ethnic minorities has been steadily growing. From 1940 to 1980, Latino, Asian, Black and other ethnic groups have grown from 10% to 32% of the state's population. Over 15% of California's population in 1980 was foreign born. Among the different groups, Latinos had the smallest decline in the "traditional" family unit (couples with children), while Blacks had the highest decline. In 1980, 47% of all Latino households in the state were still "traditional" families. Only 22% of Black households consisted of "traditional" families. In 1980, the total income for ethnic families was \$24,400 for Asian families, \$18,220 for Black families, \$18,670 for Latino families — compared with \$26,720 for Anglo families.

Seniors.¹¹ In the past three decades, the relative size of California's elderly population (65 years and older) nearly doubled from 5.6% in 1950 to 10.1% in 1980, while the percentage of children (0 to 15 years) declined from 32.2% in 1950 to 23.8% in 1980. Whites (non-Spanish surname) had the highest percentage of elderly and Latinos had the lowest percentage of elderly and the highest percentage of youths.

Employment Trends.¹² The rate of participation in the California labor force for persons 16-years-and-older increased from 55% in 1940 to 64% in 1980. The major reason for this growth was the movement of women into the labor force. The labor force participation rate (LFPR) swelled from 28% in 1940 to 52% in 1980. This shift was most pronounced for Latino females whose LFPR surged from 22% in 1940 to 52% in 1980. The increase for Black females was much smaller since they have traditionally had a high LFPR in previous decades (40% in 1940 and 1950). The LFPR for prime-age (25 to 64 year-old) males declined about 5% overall, but the decline for prime-age Black males dropped about 15%, from 93% to 78%, indicating a significant withdrawal from the labor market.

Throughout the past four decades, prime-age Black males suffered nearly three times the unemployment rate encountered by their White counterparts.

Self-employment declined over the past four decades, dropping in general from 16.8% to 9.5%.

From 1940 to 1980, about seven out of every ten employed persons were in the private sector, although government employment peaked at 17% in 1970. Sectoral employment patterns varied considerably among ethnic groups. Latinos were disproportionately concentrated in the private sector, while Blacks were disproportionately located in the government sector.

Construction and agricultural jobs sharply declined in the past four decades in California, although the largest shift in the distribution of jobs was from manufacturing to services other than personal services.

Poverty. In 1980, over 11% of California families lived in poverty.¹³ The groups with the highest poverty rates were the Black and Latino female-headed households.¹⁴ The largest growth during the 1970s in absolute numbers of Californians in poverty came from Latino couples.¹⁵

Marital Status.¹⁶ More California men and women tended to remain unmarried than men and women in the rest of the nation. Nationally, more than 60% of men over 15 years old are married and 30% single. In California, 56% are married, 32.5% are single, 9% divorced or separated, and 2% widowers. Among women over the age of 15, 54.8% in the nation are married, and 23% single. Among California women, 52.9% are married and 23.5% are single, 9% divorced or separated, and 2% are widowed.

Household Relationships.¹⁷ The state had 8,629,866 households in 1980. The majority of them (55%) contained a married couple. Unmarried couples made up about 7% of California households. Over 22% of households with children were maintained by a single parent. Nationally, there were only 19.1% single-parent households.

State Legislative Hearings

Healthy individuals, healthy families, and healthy relationships are inherently beneficial and crucial to a healthy society, and are our most precious and valuable natural resources. The well-being of the State of California depends greatly upon the healthiness and success of its

families, and the State of California values the family, marriage, and healthy human relationships.

— California Legislature
Statutes of 1986, Chapter 1365
Approved by Governor,
Sept. 29, 1986

Acknowledging the diversity of California families, the state Legislature has declared that each family is unique and complex and that the state should not attempt to make families uniform.¹⁸

Building on this premise, the California State Assembly held hearings recently, looking into changing family structures, changing family populations, and changing family economics.¹⁹ Topics addressed at these hearings included: the two-paycheck family, families headed by unmarried teens, extended families, the "graying of California," the emergence of a multicultural population, labor market trends, and dependent care.

The testimony at the hearings reflects a growing awareness that California families are experiencing tremendous social and economic changes.

Dual-Wage Earner Families.²⁰ The biggest change in family structure over the past 30 years is the increase in two-paycheck families. This has been caused by more mothers entering the workforce. In 1987, 62% of mothers with children under 18 held jobs outside the home, compared with 45%, 10 years ago and 28% in 1950. Mothers with children under three years-old now are the fastest growing segment of the workforce. Today's families are relying on two paychecks to maintain, rather than to improve, their standard of living. Many two-paycheck families complain of stress because of the double strain of working and parenting with inadequate social supports.

In 1986, 50% of all married-couple households in the state had two wage earners.²¹ It is predicted that by 1995, that figure will rise to 66%.²²

Single-Parent Families.²³ The number of families headed by a single parent — 90% of them are headed by women — has doubled in the past decade. In these households, the struggle is one of survival. Half of all female-headed households live below the poverty line today.

Teenage Mothers.²⁴ California has the second highest teen pregnancy rate in the nation, and most teens who give birth are unmarried. Forty percent of all female high school dropouts leave school because they are pregnant. This, of course, reduces their income potential.

Seniors.²⁵ By the year 2000, increased life expectancy will mean that about 15% of Californians will be seniors. It is anticipated that the number of seniors over 85 years-old will increase by 81% by the turn of the century.

Ethnic Diversity. By the century's close, Asians, Blacks and Latinos will form the majority of California's population.²⁶ More than 75% of the state's population growth in the next seven years will come from racial and ethnic minorities, primarily Latinos and Asians.²⁷

Legislative Task Forces

Both major political parties have proposed legislation aimed at a myriad of family related issues. Assemblyman Tom Bates, taking the

lead for Assembly Democrats, introduced a 10-bill package to ease family problems. One of the bills would create an Office of Family and Work to assist the private sector in developing employment policies — like child care, flex-time options, parental leave — to help employees balance work and family obligations. Other Bates' bills would: provide child care to low-income parents participating in job training; give a 4% cost of living increase to state subsidized child care programs; provide economic development funding to counties with high unemployment rates to increase the job prospects for GAIN participants who have children; require new or renovated public buildings with 700 or more employees to include child care facilities; establish pilot projects to train parents how to teach their children to read and how to teach their children to learn computer skills; give student assistance to persons training to become child care workers; step up enforcement against delinquent child support obligations; and help homeless families by allowing counties to increase deed recording fees to fund housing and job-related services to the homeless.²⁸

On child care issues, Assembly Republicans have proposed legislation to reduce the cost of insurance at day care centers, lower the student-teacher ratio requirements for state-subsidized child care, help fund training for day care providers, and give tax credits to employers who build on-site day care centers.²⁹

Task Force on Family Equity. In the past two years, the California State Senate has also concentrated on family issues. A Senate Task Force on Family Equity was formed in 1986.³⁰ The Task Force found "an alarming relationship between the economic consequences of divorce and the feminization of poverty — the growing number of women and children living below the poverty line in single-parent female-headed households."³¹ This phenomenon is particularly significant in California which has the highest number of single-parent female-headed households of any state in the nation.³²

The Senate Task Force found that divorced women and their children suffer a drastic decline in their standard of living in the first year after a divorce — an average decline of 73% — while divorced men are economically better off than they were during the marriage. The standard of living of divorced men rises an average of 42% in the first year following a divorce.³³ This disparity continues over time. One study showed that even seven years after divorce, the financial positions of ex-husbands is strikingly better than that of ex-wives.³⁴

This post-divorce household income disparity between ex-husbands and ex-wives was explained by the Senate Task Force.³⁵ In two-paycheck families, the wife's outside income typically amounts to only 44% of the husband's earnings. Thus, the husband's departure leaves a precipitous drop in income available to the wife. Additional reasons were cited for the post-divorce income gap: (1) courts rarely award spousal support — only 17% of women in California are awarded spousal support; (2) child support usually falls largely on the mother, while the father is allowed to retain the major portion of his income for himself; and (3) only 50% of custodial mothers due support actually receive full payments. The Task Force also found that the system of dividing community property in California often produces unequal results.

After nine months of discussing the results of empirical research, the Senate Task Force on Family Equity produced 23 legislative proposals to help post-divorce families cope with the plethora of problems they face. The package includes proposals that would: (1) defer the sale of family

homes so children and the custodial parent would not be immediately uprooted in order to divide community property; (2) force self-employed parents who are delinquent in child support payments to establish security deposits equal to 12 months of child support; (3) take into consideration the value of career enhancements through education and training when setting child support and alimony payments; and (4) require judges to consider a history of child or spousal abuse when determining custody. Some of the proposed reforms are opposed by fathers' rights advocates.³⁶

Also in 1987, the state Senate received a report recommending more than 15 ways to improve California's divorce mediation program. According to the report, more than 33% of the current generation of children will experience a parental divorce before they reach the age of 18.³⁷

Senate Office of Research. During 1987, the Senate Office of Research released findings regarding family income.³⁸ The economic facts are revealing. In the past 10 years, California's families have become poorer overall. While the poorer families have lost ground, the richest families have prospered. The real income of the poorest of California's families fell 9% in the past ten years, while the real income of the richest families rose 14% between 1977 and 1986. Although the top 40% of California families have continued to increase their prosperity since 1977, the other 60% have either suffered a loss of prosperity or barely stayed even. Female employment and the increasing amount of work by women was cited as the main reason why family income did not fall more than it did between 1977 and 1986.

Senate researchers compared economic prosperity along racial and ethnic lines.³⁹ Black families have not fared well. Black families in the bottom 60% of the economy have seen their real purchasing power fall by about 5% between 1977 and 1985. Latino families virtually have remained economically the same. Latino families in the lower 60% of the economy have gained a slim 1% in purchasing power since 1977. Anglo families fared much better. Although the number of Anglo families has remained constant since 1977, in 1985 there were 7,000 fewer Anglo families in the bottom 20% of the economy and 6,000 more Anglo families in the top economic quintile than in 1977. Asian and Native American families in California had a percentage loss in middle-class status, and had larger increases in the percent of their poor families than of their wealthy families.

Proposed Commission on the Family. Citing the dramatic changes that have taken place in family structures, demographics, and income and poverty levels in California, Senator Diane Watson has proposed that the State of California establish a 15-member California Commission on the Family.⁴⁰ The two-year commission would study the dynamics of family structure in California and provide the Legislature with recommendations for incorporating findings into policy development. The recommendations would address the proper role of government in providing services to families and suggest ways to better coordinate programs that serve families.

Assemblyman Bates has summed up the California family situation:⁴¹ "We've got to face the reality — families and their needs have changed. The family policies of our state are stuck in the 50s. Now it's time to move into the 80s and 90s."

Joint Select Task Force on the Changing Family. The commit

ment of Assemblyman Bates and Senator Watson to improve family life in California has been recognized by the state Legislature. These two leaders were selected to co-chair a newly created Joint Select Task Force on the Changing Family. The new task force is comprised of 6 state legislators and 20 public members.⁴² It will study family trends and issues and file a report with the Legislature by the end of 1988 recommending steps that can be taken to bring public policy into line with the reality of contemporary family life in California as it is now and as it will be in the 1990s and beyond.

CALIFORNIA FAMILIES: RECOMMENDATIONS

5. The Task Force recommends that the Legislature's Joint Select Task Force on the Changing Family review this report and its recommendations prior to issuing its own report to the Legislature in November, 1988.

6. The Task Force recommends that the Legislative Policy Statements of the City of Los Angeles be amended. Since 90% of single-parent families are headed by women, it would be appropriate for the city's "Policy Statement on Women's Issues" to include a section addressing the needs of single-parent families. The Commission on the Status of Women could assist the city in implementing this recommendation.

7. The Task Force recommends that the Los Angeles City Commission on the Status of Women review the Final Report of the California State Senate Task Force on Family Equity, and the legislative proposals arising out of that report. Based on this data, the Women's Commission may wish to propose additional legislative policy statements involving judicial education, community property, child support, spousal support, and mediation.

8. The Task Force recommends that the California League of Cities sponsor a "Family Diversity Forum" at its next annual meeting and encourage its members and participants to create appropriate mechanisms in their own jurisdictions to study changing family demographics and issues.

California Families: Notes

¹ *Pennoyer v. Neff* (1878) 95 U.S. 714, 734-735.

² "Issues Affecting California Families," *Report Submitted to the 1980 Western Regional White House Conference on Families* by the California Task Force on Families and the California Health and Welfare Agency (April, 1980).

³ *1980 Census Summary Report*, California State Census Data Center (September, 1981); Dembart, Lee, "Census Compares State with Nation," *Los Angeles Times*, May 23, 1982.

⁴ *Report of the California Commission on Personal Privacy* (State of California, 1982); "Report of the Committee on Family Relationships," *Supplement One*; "Family and Household Use Survey," *Supplement One*.

⁵ *Socio-Economic Trends in California: 1940 to 1980* (Employment Development Department, 1986); Castaneda, Ruben, "Blacks, Hispanics Slowing Down in Economic Gains," *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, May 2, 1986.

⁶ Bancroft, Ann, "California Families Turn into a High-Profile Issue," *Los Angeles Times*, April 24, 1987.

⁷ *Family Income in California*, Senate Office of Research, April, 1987; *Final Report: Senate Task Force on Family Equity*, June, 1987; *Report of the Advisory Panel on the Child Oriented Divorce Act of 1987*, April, 1987.

⁸ "Issues Affecting California Families," *supra*.

⁹ Dembart, *supra*.

¹⁰ *Socio-Economic Trends*, *supra*.

¹¹ *Ibid*.

¹² *Ibid*.

¹³ Dembart, *supra*.

¹⁴ Castaneda, *supra*.

¹⁵ *Ibid*.

¹⁶ Dembart, *supra*.

¹⁷ *Ibid*.

¹⁸ 1986 Stats., Ch. 1365 (AB 3657, Vasconcellos), Sec. 2(m).

¹⁹ *The Changing Family to the Year 2000: Planning for Our Children's Future*, State Assembly Human Services Committee, March 20-21, 1987.

²⁰ "Fact Sheet on the California Family Today," prepared by Assembly Human Services Committee Staff, March, 1987.

²¹ Yoshihara, Nancy, "State's Wage-Earners May Have to Run Harder Just to Stay Even," *Los Angeles Times*, July 9, 1987; Report, Center for the Continuing Study of the California Economy, July, 1987.

²² *Ibid*.

²³ Fact Sheet, *supra*.

²⁴ *Ibid*.

²⁵ *Ibid*.

²⁶ *Ibid*.

²⁷ Yoshihara, *supra*.

²⁸ Press Release, April 3, 1987.

²⁹ Bancroft, Ann, "California Families Turn Into a High-Profile Issue," *Los Angeles Times*, April 24, 1987.

³⁰ Senate Resolution 28 established the Task Force and requested it to study the growing body of academic and government research documenting the economic hardships created by the current family law system. In addition to Senators Roberti, Hart, Lockyer and Morgan, Task Force membership included family law scholars, judges, private and public attorneys, and advocates for women's and men's rights.

³¹ *Final Report*, Senate Task Force on Family Equity, June, 1987.

³² *Ibid*.

³³ *Ibid*.

³⁴ *Ibid*.

³⁵ *Ibid*.

³⁶ Cage, Mary, "Divorce Reforms Bring Fathers' Ire," *Daily Journal*, August 4, 1987.

³⁷ Report, Advisory Panel on the Child Oriented Divorce Act of 1987, April, 1987.

³⁸ "Family Income in California," Senate Office of Research Issue Brief, April, 1987.

³⁹ *Ibid*.

⁴⁰ Senate Bill 163, introduced January 13, 1987.

⁴¹ Press Release, April 3, 1987.

⁴² Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 89, filed with the Secretary of State on September 18, 1987.

FAMILIES OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Like other areas of the country, Los Angeles County residents have experienced changes in household and family composition which have led to greater diversity in social, economic, and personal needs. But diversity also brings social and economic challenges as the different groups strive to live and work together.

— *State of the County:
Los Angeles 1987*
United Way, Inc.

On a population basis, Los Angeles County is larger than many states in this nation. Nearly one-third of all California residents live in Los Angeles County.¹ As of 1986, the county's total population was estimated to be 8.3 million persons.²

Although the City of Los Angeles is only one of 84 cities in the county, Los Angeles city residents account for about 37% of the county's overall population.³

County government has a significant impact on Los Angeles city families. When it comes to administering family-related programs — especially those dealing with family law, health, and welfare — county government has almost exclusive jurisdiction over the lives of city families.

The Superior Court is operated with state and county funds and personnel. Therefore, county agencies and officials, not city, are involved in juvenile dependency cases, marital dissolutions, conciliation of family disputes, child custody, visitation, foster care, and adoption.

Although the city is authorized by law to establish a city health department and adopt local health ordinances, it has not done so. Instead, the city defers to the County Board of Supervisors to pass local health laws and to the County Department of Health to enforce those laws within the City of Los Angeles.

When it comes to welfare benefits and programs, it is again the county and the state — not the city — that govern and administer.

A study of families in the City of Los Angeles, therefore, must include some examination of county demographics, problems, and governmental agencies.

County Populations and Trends

The county has added 5.7 million residents since 1930. By the year 2000, the county's population is expected to grow by another one million. These population increases primarily have resulted from a high number of births, rather than a surge of immigration. Between 1985 and 1986, for example, the population rose even though 14,000 more people moved out of Los Angeles County than moved into the county. Even with births, however, had it not been for substantial immigration by ethnic minorities, the net effect of out-migration by Anglos would have been a decrease in the county's population.

Ethnic Diversity. Los Angeles County is increasing in its ethnic diversity. In 1980, just over half of the county population was Anglo (White, non-Latino). In 1986, Anglos comprised about 46% of the

county's population, with Latinos at 32%, Blacks at 13%, and Asians at 9%.

The Latino and Asian segments have more than doubled in the past 30 years, primarily due to higher birth rates and immigration trends. Latino births are outpacing those of all other ethnic segments of the population. In 1984, for example, 44.8% of all births were to Latinos, 30.7% to Anglos, and 14.4% to Blacks.

Thirty-one percent of county families speak only a non-English language at home.⁴ This compares with 23% in California and 10% nationally.

Household Composition. By 1989, the county will have approximately 3.2 million households. In 1980, 27.3% of the county's households consisted of persons living alone.⁵ This figure will increase to 29% by 1989. Among married couples, two-earner households increased from 26% in 1960 to 47% in 1986.

Marital Status. Thirty-five percent of county residents over 15 years-old are single (never married).⁶ This compares with a national figure of 30%. Nearly 53% of county residents over 15 years-old are married. About 12% are divorced or widowed.

Housing Trends in the County

Home ownership in the county is declining. In 1980, 49% of housing units were owner occupied. In 1989, owner-occupied units will decrease to 45% of the housing stock. The median sale price of existing single-family detached homes jumped from \$113,421 in 1982 to \$128,799 in 1986. Median rents more than doubled in the county between 1970 and 1980.

It is predicted that the number of homeless families will grow as the cost of shelter moves beyond the means of a greater number of lower-income families.

Presently, some of the existing housing is inadequate. For example, more than 53,000 housing units have either no bathroom or only 1/2 bath. Thus, families in those units lack adequate bathing facilities.⁷

Transportation Issues in the County

Streets and highways in the county are getting more congested. Traffic congestion is affected by housing and employment factors. Eighty-six percent of employees get to work by car.⁸ The growing number of two-paycheck married households no doubt contributes to growing traffic problems. Also, more workers are driving more miles to and from work. This trend is related to out-migration triggered by those seeking more affordable housing, which is more readily available in suburban and rural areas of the county. The resulting increase in traffic congestion will generate continued need for new transportation modes and stronger incentives for business-sponsored car pool systems.

Thankfully, alcohol-related traffic accidents have been decreasing in the county. Legal and public relations campaigns against drinking and driving appear to be working. Unfortunately, motor vehicle accidents are still the leading cause of death for county youths between ages 10 and 19.

Trends in County Schools

The county has 82 school districts within its boundaries. School enrollment in public kindergarten increased by 12% between 1981 and 1986. Increases in county birth rates and immigration patterns are expected to produce population growth at all grade levels. Naturally, changes in county demographics, as well as increased diversity in family structures and family problems, affect the county's schools in many ways.

Adult Education. The major population increases in the county between 1980 and 2000 will occur in the 35 to 50 age groups. The growth of the mid-life population requires that a broader array of adult, vocational, and continuing education options be offered.

Multicultural Needs. The student population in the county's schools is becoming increasingly diverse. Anglo representation declined five percent between the 1981-1982 school year and the 1985-1986 school year. Black representation also declined during that same period. These trends were offset by increases in Latino and Asian enrollment.

Such changes have created a demand for more ethnically responsive education materials and teaching modes. So-called "world view" materials can enhance students' appreciation of social and economic opportunities generated by the growing interdependency of nations. A broader range of intercultural materials can stress the richness of a multicultural environment.

A growing and ethnically diverse school-age population also requires more variety in the composition of staff. Students need positive "role models" with whom they can identify. Especially at the high school level, there is a need for more diversity among high school counselors who serve as role models for racial, ethnic, and sexual minority students.

One in five public school students needs bilingual education. This is evidenced by the number of limited or non-English-proficient students in the county's schools.

The large number of immigrants requires more teachers and more classes in "English as a Second Language," especially in the primary grades and in adult education.

School Dropouts. Dropout rates in the county's schools are high. Possibly 40% of the area youth do not complete high school. Drug abuse and teenage pregnancy contribute to the dropout rate.

A greater emphasis on programs designed to prevent pregnancy and drug abuse could help alleviate the dropout problem.

Employment Trends in the County

Los Angeles County is the largest employment area in California. The number of persons employed in the county will rise from 3.9 million in 1980 to a staggering 4.8 million in 2000. Most workers in the county are employed in service occupations, such as insurance, accounting and education. Manufacturing has the second highest number of jobs.

The county has experienced a growth in businesses owned by women and minorities in recent years. Female entrepreneur businesses jumped 200% between 1977 and 1982. During the same period, Latino-owned

businesses grew by 75%, Black-owned businesses by 50%, and businesses owned by Asians and other minorities grew over 100%.

Unemployment and job benefits are two of the major employment issues affecting county families.

Minority Unemployment. Unemployment rates for Blacks and Latinos are higher than for Anglos living in the county. Blacks historically have the highest unemployment rate and Black youth presently have the highest rate of any group.

Employee Benefits. The increases in single-parent families, two-paycheck families, and older and middle-age workers require changes in employee benefit programs, especially since an increasing portion of employee compensation now is paid indirectly in the form of benefits rather than in direct wages.

The demographic changes in the workforce call for the adoption of more flexible work schedules, increased child care services, and expanded employee assistance programs (e.g., drug rehabilitation assistance, family conflict resolution, mid-life crisis counseling, etc.)

County Commissions and Family Issues

On an ongoing basis, several county commissions conduct research, hold public hearings, issue reports, and make recommendations concerning issues affecting county families.

Human Relations Commission

The county's Human Relations Commission consists of 15 members appointed by the Board of Supervisors. It has an annual budget of approximately \$900,000. The commission conducts community programs which assist civic, religious, business, governmental and professional groups in resolving human relations problems. It provides conflict resolution services when specific inter-group tension surfaces. It sponsors conferences and leadership training programs. The commission also engages in research and conducts public hearings on human relations topics, disseminating reports to interested groups and individuals.

The following are excerpts from reports issued by the commission in recent years.

Immigrants.⁹ Los Angeles County is the home of 1.6 million foreign-born persons, according to 1980 census figures. No other county in the nation has such a large immigrant population.

The ethnic diversity created by immigration has been accompanied by intergroup tension and conflict, sometimes manifesting itself in discrimination, vandalism and violence.

The commission found that: (1) hostile attitudes toward immigrants and refugees were widespread among the general public; (2) employment discrimination is a major problem for immigrants and refugees; (3) workplace raids by the INS have resulted in discriminatory treatment of many Latinos and Asians who are American citizens; and (4) many immigrants are denied equal access to health care.

Gays and Lesbians.¹⁰ It has been estimated that about 10% of the general population has a sexual orientation which is predominantly

homosexual. This means that about 800,000 gays and lesbians live in Los Angeles County.

Regarding the county's gay and lesbian population, the commission has found that: (1) scientists believe that sexual orientation is established early in life; (2) there is no significant difference in the incidence of anti-social behavior between homosexuals and heterosexuals; (3) many religious and secular institutions have been reluctant to acknowledge the common humanity of lesbians and gay men; (4) anti-gay bigotry is often reinforced by insensitive and stereotypical depiction of gays in the media; (5) living in an atmosphere of prejudice puts considerable stress on gays and lesbians; (6) employment discrimination against gays is perceived to be widespread; (7) an historically tense relationship has existed between the gay community and law enforcement; and (8) the gay and lesbian community is alarmed by the increase in anti-gay harassment and violence.

Housing Discrimination.¹¹ The denial of housing rights to individuals and families in Los Angeles County is an unfortunate reality in the 1980s. The commission reported that four of the Los Angeles City Fair Housing Councils received 1,662 complaints of discrimination during 1984. The councils estimate that these complaints were merely the "tip of the iceberg," representing less than 25% of the actual incidents of discrimination on the areas they served.

On the subject of housing discrimination, the commission found that: (1) Los Angeles is the first major metropolitan area to be a true multi-ethnic, multiracial society; (2) by 1999, most individuals living in the county will not be able to afford a home; (3) affordable rental housing is declining at a significant rate; (4) the problem of deteriorating and inadequate housing is prevalent in many racially and economically segregated communities; (5) competition for the limited resources of housing can exacerbate intergroup stress and conflict; (6) housing discrimination has a pronounced and disparate effect on Blacks, female-headed households, immigrants and refugees, the disabled, the economically disadvantaged, and families with children; and (7) a limited political and financial priority is often put on fair housing efforts despite the fact that racial segregation is one of the county's most persistent racial problems.

Hate Crimes.¹² In 1980, the commission began gathering data, investigating, responding to, and reporting on incidents of racially and religiously motivated vandalism and violence.

The commission found a decrease in such violence during 1983 and 1984, with a leveling off in 1985. However, hate crimes started increasing in 1986 and this trend has continued as residences, businesses, and houses of worship became targets.

In mid-1987, the commission announced that it now will monitor incidents of anti-gay violence in the county.

Discomfort with demographic changes, ongoing intergroup or neighborhood tensions, and youthful mischief-making all contribute to the problem of violence against minorities.

The commission has found that: (1) residences were the target of 75.8% of racial violence and the most frequent target (44.2%) of religious incidents; (2) racial attacks during 1986 showed a pattern of repeat attacks and a propensity for interracial families as targets; (3)

about 36% of racially motivated incidents occurred within the City of Los Angeles; and (4) about 57% of the religiously motivated violence happened in the City of Los Angeles.

Women's Commission

The Los Angeles County Commission on the Status of Women provided the Task Force on Family Diversity with specific suggestions regarding the problems of older women, particularly their needs for pay equity, divorce law reform, respite care, affordable housing, and access to health care.¹³ These and other issues affecting women are discussed in more detail in other sections of this report.

Many of the equity concerns brought to the attention of the Task Force by the county Women's Commission have been echoed in a report recently issued by the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues on the status of women in 1987-88.¹⁴

Commission on Disabilities

The county's Commission on Disabilities was established by county ordinance and is comprised of 16 members who represent various areas of disability. The Commission advises the Board of Supervisors on issues dealing with disability.

A representative of the Commission on Disabilities testified at public hearings conducted by the Task Force on Family Diversity.¹⁵ A major concern raised during this testimony involved needed improvements in public transportation — and what the City of Los Angeles should do to improve the situation for persons with disabilities. These issues are addressed in detail in the sections of this report which focus on families with disabled members.

Commission on AIDS

Soon after it became apparent that acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) was a health crisis that would affect the Los Angeles area for many years, a joint City-County Task Force on AIDS was convened by Mayor Tom Bradley and Supervisor Ed Edelman. The Task Force on AIDS served for several years, until the Board of Supervisors established a formal County Commission on AIDS. The 18-member Commission on AIDS held its first meeting in August, 1987.

Facts About AIDS:

The following factual backdrop underscores the challenge facing the Commission.

Cause of AIDS. AIDS is caused by a viral infection that breaks down the body's natural immune protections, leaving it vulnerable to virulent diseases normally resisted or repulsed by a healthy immune system.¹⁶ The agent of transmission is HIV or Human Immunodeficiency Virus.¹⁷

Transmission of the Virus. The medical evidence regarding transmission of the virus is conclusive that the infection is spread by sexual conduct with infected persons, exposure to contaminated blood or blood products through transfusion (sharing of hypodermic needles or by contaminated blood transfu-

Facts About AIDS: continued

sions) and by perinatal transmission, and that there is no known risk by other means. In other words, the AIDS virus is not transmitted by casual contact.¹⁸

Clinical Reactions to Infection. Persons whose bodies carry the virus fall into a spectrum of clinical reactions, from totally asymptomatic (the largest percentage), to mild or severe illnesses consisting of non-specific symptoms (AIDS-related complex or ARC), to major and deadly opportunistic diseases (AIDS).¹⁹

In discussing AIDS, therefore, it is important to distinguish between those who are merely infected (HIV antibody positive), those who have moderately serious associated illnesses (ARC), and those who have developed fatal opportunistic diseases (AIDS).

Early estimates had predicted that about twenty-five percent of persons who are HIV antibody positive may ultimately develop the full-blown disease of AIDS. More recent projections estimate much higher rates. The incubation period from infection to development of AIDS is believed to vary from three to seven years.²⁰

Incidence and Mortality Rate. The Commission on AIDS has been confronted with statistics gathered by the County Health Department and alarming projections by medical scientists.²¹

HIV Antibody-Positive Persons. It has been estimated that between 135,000 and 150,000 persons in Los Angeles County have been infected by the AIDS virus.²² Approximately 30% of these antibody positive persons will ultimately develop full-blown AIDS, probably within the next seven years.

Persons With AIDS. More than 4,700 cases of full-blown AIDS have been reported and confirmed in Los Angeles County since 1981. The overwhelming majority of these are adult cases. The mortality percentage of these full-blown AIDS cases has been over 60%.

Projections. It has been estimated that about 130 cases of full-blown AIDS will be confirmed in Los Angeles County each month. By 1991, experts anticipate there will have been 31,000 confirmed cases of full-blown AIDS in the county.

The Effects of AIDS on Families:

AIDS is having its effect on thousands of Los Angeles families. Each person who tests HIV antibody positive but has no observable symptoms, who has developed ARC, and who has full-blown AIDS, has family relationships. Since the average age of infected persons is in the 30s, most of their parents are probably still living. Statistically, somewhere between 30% and 50% of infected persons live with a spouse or lifemate. Most have at least one sibling. Thus, even if 90% of those infected with the HIV virus in Los Angeles County are homosexual or

bisexual²³, close family relationships provide a mighty multiplier of those affected by the disease, and most of those affected thereby are heterosexual.

Little research has been done on the effect of AIDS on family relationships. Those articles that have been published on the subject indicate that AIDS takes a psychological toll on spouses, lifemates, and other immediate family members.²⁴ One local person with AIDS summarized the plight of family members who serve as primary caregivers:²⁵

AIDS is perceived as altering the life of one person. This is not the whole truth. As the patient becomes slowly dependent upon someone else, finally needing help all day, all week, the disease slowly destroys the quality of life for two people. The caregiver of the AIDS patient is also held hostage by the disease.

According to Jaak Hamilton, a Los Angeles therapist specializing in AIDS and family relationships, most AIDS patients feel the need to seek acceptance and love from their families. Hamilton says there is a continuum of responses from parents, from those who absolutely cut off their child, to those whose lives go through an entire metamorphosis in order to provide continuous support.²⁶ Although some families respond with anger and rejection, Hamilton says, this is not the typical response:²⁷

I have found that about 90% of these families put aside whatever biases or fears or prejudices they have because the love they have for the affected adult child transcends all other feelings. And almost always they are there to hold a hand, massage a foot, cry and say: "I love you."

Ethnic minority families bear a major brunt of the trauma caused by the AIDS crisis since a disproportionate number of minorities have AIDS.²⁸ Although Blacks and Latinos constitute 19 percent of the United States population, they comprise 38% of all reported AIDS cases in the country, and 80% of all children with AIDS are Black or Hispanic.

Hospice and In-Home Care. At least a partial solution to some significant problems experienced by persons with AIDS and their families seems to lie in dramatically increased funding for in-home services, respite care for primary caregivers, and hospices.²⁹ Last year the Board of Supervisors acted favorably on a recommendation from the county's new AIDS Commission, by directing the county health department to expedite the implementation of a hospice and home-care program for persons with AIDS and ARC.³⁰ The Task Force on Family Diversity commends the Los Angeles AIDS Hospice Committee, the County AIDS Commission, and the Board of Supervisors for working together to expedite the development of hospice and home-care services.

The LaRouche Initiative. Persons with AIDS, medical researchers, service providers, educators and policy makers are already working overtime in the fight against AIDS. They do not need the distraction and resource drain caused by factually unjustifiable initiatives, such as that supported by Lyndon LaRouche. Such initiatives offer public identification and/or isolation of infected persons, thus depriving personal privacy and dignity, and providing fuel — if not legal sanction — to employment, housing, and other forms of discrimi-

nation. The discrimination, in turn, is not helpful but is actually harmful to the campaign to control the spread of the disease and to find a cure for those already infected.

FAMILIES OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY: RECOMMENDATIONS

9. The Task Force recommends that the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors establish a County Task Force on Family Diversity to study the problems experienced by contemporary families in the county and to recommend ways in which family-related county programs can better serve the needs of Los Angeles families. A two-year task force of this nature could synthesize information available from county agencies and commissions, hold public hearings, solicit advice from professionals in public and private sector agencies serving local families, and issue a comprehensive report to assist the Board of Supervisors and county departments meet the challenges posed by changing family demographics and family structures.

10. The Task Force recommends that the Los Angeles County Commission on AIDS continually study the impact of AIDS on family relationships for the purpose of recommending ways in which public and private sector agencies could better assist spouses, lifemates, parents, siblings, and other immediate family members of people with AIDS in coping with the myriad of problems caused by the disease.

Families of Los Angeles County: Notes

- ¹ *State of the County: Los Angeles 1987*, published by United Way, Inc.
- ² Ibid. Unless otherwise indicated, the source of data in this section on "Los Angeles County Families" has been extracted from United Way's 1987 report.
- ³ "Family Demographics," *Report of the Task Force on Family Diversity: Supplement - Part One*, p. S-30.
- ⁴ Dembart, Lee, "Census Compares State With Nation," *Los Angeles Times*, May 23, 1982.
- ⁵ Ibid.
- ⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷ Ibid.
- ⁸ Ibid.
- ⁹ "Plight of the New Americans: Discrimination Against Immigrants and Refugees," *Report on a Public Hearing*, Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations (November, 1985).
- ¹⁰ "Prejudice and Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation: Myth and Reality About Gays and Lesbians in Los Angeles County," *Report on a Public Hearing*, Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations (April, 1985).
- ¹¹ "Division in the Midst of Diversity: Continuing Discrimination in Housing," *Report of a Public Hearing*, Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations (April, 1986).
- ¹² "Racially and Religiously Motivated Vandalism and Violence in Los Angeles County in 1986," *Report to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors*, Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations (February, 1987).
- ¹³ Testimony of Commissioner June Dunbar, Public Hearing, March 16, 1987, *Transcript of Public Hearings*, p. 156.
- ¹⁴ A Shifting Economy . . . But Not For Women," *Los Angeles Times*, August 16, 1987.
- ¹⁵ Testimony of Commission Chairperson Sue Ridenour, Public Hear

ing, April 8, 1987, *Transcript of Public Hearings*, p. 282.

¹⁶ Health and Safety Code Section 199.46, amended September, 1986 by AB 4250.

¹⁷ Stats. 1986, Ch. 498, Sec. 1.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.; Senate Bill 1928 (Sept., 1986).

²⁰ H & S Sec. 199.46, *supra*.

²¹ "AIDS — Report for June 1987," Memo by Robert C. Gates, Director of Health Services, July 10, 1987; Interview with Martin D. Finn, M.D., Medical Director, AIDS Program Office, County of Los Angeles, August 13, 1987; "County AIDS Cases Rise," *Los Angeles Times*, April 19, 1988.

²² Ibid.; SB 1928, *supra*.

²³ Memo by Robert Gates, *supra*.

²⁴ Cimons, Marlene, "AIDS Victim Gets Family Support: Many Fear Rejection," *Los Angeles Times*, August 13, 1987.

²⁵ Koehn, Hank, "My Passage Through AIDS," *Los Angeles Times*, August 14, 1987.

²⁶ Cimons, *supra*.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ "Minorities Demand More Say in AIDS Fight," *Los Angeles Daily Journal*, August 11, 1987.

²⁹ Kattlove, Herman, "AIDS Brings Urgency to Need for Hospice," *Los Angeles Times*, August 16, 1987.

³⁰ "Hospice Funding Approved," *The News*, December 25, 1987.