

# Nation's poverty rate down for 2nd year

WASHINGTON (AP) — The nation's poverty rate declined for the second consecutive year as economic improvement helped Americans' incomes to grow, the Census Bureau reported Tuesday.

The study found 14.0 percent of Americans living in poverty in 1985, down from 14.4 percent a year earlier. At the same time, real — or inflation-adjusted — income of American families increased 1.3 percent, the third consecutive increase, the bureau said.

"We're out of the recession now; it's a better time," said Gordon Green, acting chief of the bureau's Population Division.

That assessment was questioned, however, by Robert Fersh, executive director of the Food Research and Action Center, an advocacy group pressing for improved social programs.

"We are deeply concerned that three years into the recovery, the poverty level remains at a high rate. And given the state of the economy, prospects for improvement are slim," Fersh said.

He called for more job training and other social programs.

Green, however, contended that the improvements in the nation's economy are spreading out, affecting more segments of society.

The drop in poverty was not as large as occurred between 1983 and 1984, when the share of Americans below the poverty level dropped from 15.2 percent to 14.4 percent after having risen from 15.0 percent in 1982, Green told reporters.

"Still, it is the right trend," he said. The 1985 poverty rate represents 33.1 million people living in poverty, down from 33.7 million in 1984.

The 1985 poverty threshold ranges from an annual income of \$5,469 for an individual to \$22,083 for a family of nine or more. The once-typical American family of four, the most often-cited figure, has a poverty threshold of \$10,989.

Median family income in 1985 was \$27,740, the report said, up 4.9 percent from 1984. After adjusting for inflation of 3.6 percent, it represented a real increase of 1.3 percent in Americans' income, the bureau said. That represented the third annual increase in real family income. Median income means half of all families earn more than that amount and half less.

Other findings of the new Census Bureau study of Americans income and poverty status included:

- Blacks had the highest poverty rate at 31.3 percent, but that was down from 33.8 percent in 1984. The poverty rate for whites dipped

from 11.5 percent to 11.4 percent. For Hispanics the rate edged up slightly, from 28.4 percent to 29.0 percent.

- For the elderly, the poverty rate edged up slightly, from 12.4 percent to 12.6 percent.

- The Northeast had the largest drop in poverty, the rate there falling from 13.2 percent to 11.6 percent as the economic recovery was most significant in this area.

The South had the highest poverty rate in 1985, 16 percent, down from 16.2 percent. In the Midwest, the rate went from 13.1 percent to 13.0 percent, and in the West it fell from 14.1 percent to 13.9 percent.

- Per capita income was \$11,670 for whites, up 2.0 percent; \$6,840 for blacks, up 4.9 percent; and \$6,610 for Hispanics, statistically unchanged.

- Married-couple families had the top median income at \$31,100, up 1.4 percent. Income was \$13,660 for households headed by a female with no husband present, not a statistically significant change.

- Households headed by someone with five or more years of college had the greatest increase in income, up 4.6 percent to a median of \$50,530. For people with four years of college, income rose 2.4 percent.

# Association advises public to reduce cholesterol, fats

WASHINGTON (AP) — The American Heart Association announced a major revision of its influential dietary guidelines Tuesday, with specific advice on reducing cholesterol and fats and recommendations on how people can limit use of sodium and alcohol.

Along with reducing fats, the new guidelines say that Americans should cut sodium intake by eating less than a level teaspoon of salt daily, and hold their alcohol consumption to less than the equivalent two

beers or two glasses of wine each day.

The American diet, high in fats, sodium and calories, remains a major factor in the development of heart and blood vessel disease despite a 29 percent drop in the heart disease death rate over the last 20 years, the association said.

"More than 63 million Americans suffer from one or more forms of heart and blood vessel disease, and this year almost 1 million people will die as a result of cardiovascular dis-

eases," said Dr. W. Virgil Brown of Mount Sinai Medical School in New York, past chairman of the committee which drafted the new guidelines.

Brown said Americans, particularly those who are well-educated and health-conscious, are moving toward the heart association's diet goals first established 25 years ago. But more needs to be done to persuade other segments of the population to switch to balanced, lower-calorie diets containing a variety of foods low in fats, cholesterol and sodium, he said at a news briefing.

The new recommendations emphasize consuming or restricting certain kinds of foods in proportion to the total calories a person needs each day to maintain his or her ideal weight.

Brown said past guidelines focused too much on eating or not eating certain amounts of food and may not have been realistic for people who consume smaller portions because of body size, particularly women.

Currently, about 40 percent of the calories the average American consumes come from fats. The new guidelines say that total fat intake should be less than 30 percent, down from the 30 to 35 percent recommended in the previous guidelines issue in 1978.

The new recommendations said saturated fats, identified as those that remain solid at room temperature, should make up no more than 10 percent of total calories.

Cholesterol intake should be about 100 milligrams per 1,000 calories consumed each day and not exceed 300 milligrams, about the amount found in one egg.

Sodium consumption, which is linked to high blood pressure, should be restricted to one gram per 1,000 calories consumed and not exceed 3 grams, the amount found in one level teaspoon, or 5 grams, of salt, the association said.

Since widely publicized studies indicate those who drink moderately have less heart disease than those who abstain, the new guidelines address alcohol consumption for the first time.

If people consume alcohol, the association said, they should not exceed one and a half ounces of pure alcohol daily, or the amount found in two 12-ounce beers.

# AIDS virus discovered in insects in Africa no threat to humans

PARIS (AP) — Insects contaminated with the AIDS virus have been found in two African nations, but there is no evidence that they pose a threat to humans, a leading French researcher said Tuesday.

Most of the 80 mosquitoes, cockroaches, ant-lions, tsetse flies and other insects tested from Zaire and the Central African Republic were infected with the deadly virus, said Dr. Jean-Claude Chermann of the Pasteur Institute.

In a telephone interview with The Associated Press, he said the presence of the virus "reinforces the idea of possible AIDS transmission by this path," but epidemiological studies have yet to find evidence that the disease has spread to humans from insects.

Those studies have shown conclusively that school-age children, who are frequently outdoors and thus subject to mosquito bites, do not get AIDS unless they acquired it from their mothers at birth.

"Epidemiology is very clear about that," he said. "There is no way of transmission to humans by mosquitoes or other insects."

The researcher said his study, to be published next week in the journal of the Paris Academy of Sciences, demonstrates the "existence of a natural reservoir for

this virus" that could prove helpful in AIDS research.

Chermann and two colleagues at the Pasteur Institute are among those who discovered the AIDS virus. His latest findings were announced at the 14th International Cancer Conference this week in Budapest, Hungary.

AIDS, acquired immune deficiency syndrome, makes the immune system unable to resist disease, and there is no known cure. It was identified first in male homosexuals, hemophiliacs and intravenous drug users.

The virus can be transmitted by sexual contact, sharing of contaminated needles by drug users, transfusions of blood or blood products or infection from mother to child near the time of birth.

According to Chermann, it is too early to tell whether discovery of the virus in African insects could help in the fight against AIDS.

The receptor for the AIDS virus — the area on the outside of the cell where the virus enters — "is very specific" and it could prove valuable if the virus receptor in insects proves to be similar to that in humans, he said.

"If it's the same receptor in an insect, we could make an antibody" that would prevent the spread of the disease in humans, the researcher said.

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31	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
32	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
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