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OA/ID Number: 13753
Folder ID Number: 13753-011

Folder Title:
Housing Event - St. Louis, Missouri 5/3/91 [OA 8322] [1]

Stack:	Row:	Section:	Shelf:	Position:
G	26	21	3	6

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM
APR 30

DATE: 4/30/91 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: NOON, THURSDAY, MAY 1

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: HOUSING EVENT
COCHRAN GARDENS, ST. LOUIS
SUBJECT: FRIDAY, MAY 3, 1991

	ACTION FYI			ACTION FYI	
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCCLURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SUNUNU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PETERSMEYER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ROGICH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BRADY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SMITH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BROMLEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	UNTERMAYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CARD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ROGERS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SNOW	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GRAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HOLIDAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS:

Please provide comments/edits on the attached directly to Tony Snow, Rm. 122, x2930, with a copy to this office NO LATER THAN NOON, THURSDAY, MAY 1. Thank you.
WEDNESDAY,

RESPONSE:

Handwritten signature

PHILLIP D. BRADY
Assistant to the President
and Staff Secretary
Ext. 2702

91 APR 30 AM 11:16

(Smith/Grossman)
April 30, 1991
Draft Four
COCHRAN

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: HOUSING EVENT
COCHRAN GARDENS, ST. LOUIS
FRIDAY, MAY 3, 1991

Secretary Kemp, Bertha Gilkey, head of the National Tenant Union. (acknowledgments) Residents of Cochran Gardens. Ladies and gentlemen. /

First, let me say how pleased I am to be in St. Louis, along with Secretary Kemp. ((I come here as a resident of public housing. Like you, I've tried to get some troublemakers evicted from my block. // But then Barbara reminded me about freedom of the press.)) //

Second, I promise to be brief. ((After all, it was one of St. Louis' favorite sons, Yogi Berra, who said, "It's not over till it's over." Then he heard one of my speeches and changed it to, "It seems like it'll never be over.")) //

Yogi would have loved what I've just seen -- your new children's playground. I can't describe how wonderful it is to see an area once called Little Nam replaced by an environment where children can play / learn / dream / grow. //

Missouri, of course, is known as the "Show Me" state. But while you are known for your skepticism, I come here today to salute your example. // You've shown America what happens when people are freed to take control of their communities. // When men and women seize their homes and streets from drug dealers. //

When playgrounds become safe harbors for children, not safe havens for criminals. // You don't live in a project. You have turned apartment blocks into homes, tenants into neighbors. Your example gives people around this nation hope. Pride. //

Miss Lavin
 Contrast your success with the failure of projects like the Pruitt-Igoe (PREW it - EYE go). Think of how Pruitt-Igoe blighted this very neighborhood -- attracted crime, sheltered drugs. / To me -- to many of us here -- that vacant lot symbolizes the shortcomings of past public-housing policy. //

Today, more and more Americans know that the solutions of the 1960s can't meet the challenges of the Nineties. That a system that puts government in charge of everything leaves no room for individual dignity. That a system that warehouses people strips those people of their basic humanity. I'm here to say: If the system's not helping build a better life, then we must help build a better system. //

Our housing programs must respect individual dignity. As we enter the next American century, we must break the logjam prevents poor Americans from breaking free. We must broaden access to the basics of the good life: home ownership, jobs, quality education. //

Last November we moved toward those goals by signing the National Affordable Housing Act -- the most radical departure in Federal housing policy in two decades. / Its core is HOPE -- Homeownership and Opportunity for People Everywhere. HOPE moves housing policy in a new direction. It lets public housing

residents like you to manage your property -- and eventually own it. //

It responds to a need Bertha Gilkey described when she said: "We don't want to be taken care of, we want to be trained how to take care of ourselves." / That is, to be treated like human beings, not just as statistics to be warehoused in projects.

Bertha Gilkey has carried her message across America, and Americans in housing projects have said: Yes, that is what we want. We want dignity. We want independence. We want responsibility. //

This crusade is but a start. Although I am proud that under our Administration, the number of residents' groups training to become resident managers has leaped from 13 to 100, we must do more. //

Today, 3 million people living in public housing. Only 9,355 units are managed by their residents. I call on Congress to give us full funding for the HOPE Initiative. We want to help 40,000 residents in some 400 public housing communities launched towards homeownership by the end of 1992. //

But neighborhoods need more than houses. They need jobs. They need life. They need opportunities. // That's why Congress must move swiftly to pass our Enterprise Zone and Job-Creation Act. We want grocery stores, shops, dry cleaners, gas stations, and other small businesses to settle in places like Cochran Gardens. We want entrepreneurs to set up their own businesses, and offer jobs to local residents.

Enterprise Zones can turn poor neighborhoods into potential business centers. They offer the hope that the biggest businessman in this neighborhood will not be the crack dealer, but the responsible businessman or woman. Just as important, we want a tax code that will not punish people who take responsible jobs in the inner cities. //

Let's remember. We don't want cosmetic change. You've had enough of that. We don't want to clean up things just for appearances, and turn our backs when times get tough. We must restore to our communities a sense of purpose and pride.

The Community Opportunity Act of 1991 lets communities figure out how to make federal programs address individual, family, and community needs. It shifts power from the heavy hand of the state, to the hands that run the home. // It cuts down on what government must do -- and increases what the individual may do. //

These are great goals -- worthy of this State, and of our Nation. It makes us all active partners in building a better future. It once was said: "Destiny is not a matter of chance, it is a matter of choice; it is not a thing to be waited for, it is a thing to be achieved." //

You, the people of Cochran Gardens have made your choice. Now, you're making history. Thank you all very much for being here. God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

#

His new, unverified

William James Bryan

(Smith/Grossman)
April 30, 1991
Draft Four
COCHRAN

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: HOUSING EVENT
COCHRAN GARDENS, ST. LOUIS
FRIDAY, MAY 3, 1991

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First, let me say how pleased I am to be in St. Louis, along with Secretary Kemp. ((I come here as a resident of public housing. Like you, I've tried to get some troublemakers evicted from my block. // But then Barbara reminded me about freedom of the press.)) //

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Missouri, of course, is known as the "Show Me" state. But while you are known for your skepticism, I come here today to salute your example. // You've shown America what happens when people are freed to take control of their communities. // When men and women seize their homes and streets from drug dealers. //

When playgrounds become safe harbors for children, not safe havens for criminals. // You don't live in a project. You have turned apartment blocks into homes, tenants into neighbors. Your example gives people around this nation hope. Pride. //

Contrast your success with the failure of projects like the Pruitt-Igoe (PREW it - EYE go). Think of how Pruitt-Igoe blighted this very neighborhood -- attracted crime, sheltered drugs. / To me -- to many of us here -- that vacant lot symbolizes the shortcomings of past public-housing policy. //

Today, more and more Americans know that the solutions of the 1960s can't meet the challenges of the Nineties. That a system that puts government in charge of everything leaves no room for individual dignity. That a system that warehouses people strips those people of their basic humanity. I'm here to say: If the system's not helping build a better life, then we must help build a better system. //

Our housing programs must respect individual dignity. As we enter the next American century, we must break the logjam that prevents poor Americans from breaking free. We must broaden access to the basics of the good life: home ownership, jobs, quality education. //

Last November we moved toward those goals by signing the National Affordable Housing Act -- the most radical departure in Federal housing policy in two decades. / Its core is HOPE -- Homeownership and Opportunity for People Everywhere. HOPE moves housing policy in a new direction. It lets public housing

residents like you to manage your property -- and eventually own it. //

It responds to a need Bertha Gilkey described when she said: "We don't want to be taken care of, we want to be trained how to take care of ourselves." / That is, to be treated like human beings, not just as statistics to be warehoused in projects.

Bertha Gilkey has carried her message across America, and Americans in housing projects have said: Yes, that is what we want. We want dignity. We want independence. We want responsibility. //

This crusade is but a start. Although I am proud that under our Administration, the number of residents groups training to become resident managers has leaped from 13 to 100, we must do more. //

Today, 3 million people living ^l in public housing. Only 9,355 units are managed by their residents. I call on Congress to give us full funding for the HOPE Initiative. We want to help ^{launch} 40,000 residents in some 400 public housing communities ~~launched~~ towards homeownership by the end of 1992. //

But neighborhoods need more than houses. They need jobs. They need life. They need opportunities. // That's why I am announcing today that the Enterprise Zone and Jobs-Creation Act of 1991 will be introduced in Congress next week. I call on the Congress to act swiftly / to pass this legislation / and so we may encourage grocery stores, shops, dry cleaners, gas stations, and other small businesses to settle in places like Cochran Gardens./

This Act designates up to 50 enterprise zones over a four-year period. Helping entrepreneurs to set up their own businesses, and offer jobs to local residents. / It will turn poor neighborhoods into potential business centers -- and offer the hope that the biggest businessman in this neighborhood will not be the crack dealer, but the responsible businessman or woman. / As part of this legislation, I also call on Congress to give enterprise zone communities priority for free trade area status -- and to eliminate capital gains taxes on investment such as buildings and property. We want a tax code that will not punish people who take responsible jobs in the inner cities. //

Let's remember. We don't want cosmetic change. You've had enough of that. We don't want to clean up things just for appearances, and turn our backs when times get tough. The Enterprise Zone and Jobs-Creation Act of 1991 means real change. Restoring to our communities a sense of purpose and pride.

Toward that end, I am proud to announce that The Community Opportunity Act of 1991 will also be transmitted to Congress } today? today. Legislation which will let communities figure out how to make federal programs address individual, family, and community needs. //

This Act will enable localities to develop "community opportunity systems" and restructure Federal programs. It shifts power from the heavy hand of the state, to the hands that run the home. // We want to restore Urban America's body so that America can throw wide her heart. This legislation does. It cuts down

on what government must do -- and increases what the individual may do. //

These are great goals -- worthy of this State, and of our Nation. It makes us all active partners in building a better future. It once was said: "Destiny is not a matter of chance, it is a matter of choice; it is not a thing to be waited for, it is a thing to be achieved." //

You, the people of Cochran Gardens, have made your choice. Now, you're making history. Thank you all very much for being here. God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

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page #5

(Smith/Grossman)
April 27, 1991
10:30 A.M.
Draft One

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: HOUSING EVENT
COCHRAN GARDENS, ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI
Friday, May 3, 1991

Secretary Kemp, Bertha Gilkey, head of the National Tenant Union. (acknowledgments) Residents and homeowners of Cochran Gardens. (I speak to you today as a resident of public housing. I tried to get some troublemakers evicted from my block too -- but I'm told it's freedom of the press.)

You know your state used to be called the "Show Me" state. From what I've seen today it's not hard to understand why. You've shown ~~everyone~~ what happens when people are empowered to take control of their community. -- They take it from a haven for drug dealers to a harbor for children, from the failures of neglect to the victories of volunteerism, from the despair of dependency to the pride of self-reliance. They take it from project / to neighborhood. I've just seen a new pre-school playground. I can't describe how wonderful it is to see an area once called Little Nam replaced by an environment where children are safe to play, to learn, to grow. Expand on specifics

Contrast this success story with the failure of projects like the Pruitt-Igoe. Crime-ridden, it was torn down almost two decades ago. To me, to many of us here, that vacant lot symbolizes the empty promises of public-housing policy.

To more and more Americans it is becoming clear that the solutions of the past aren't up to the challenges of the present.

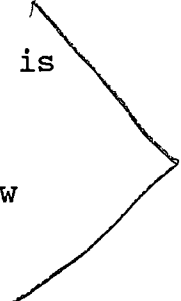
But it

(10)

The safety-net ~~that~~ should have helped people bounce back, only served to trap them in perpetual poverty, dependence, and despair. Some, ~~like Bertha Gilkey~~, are saying "enough is enough." They are lifting their voices to demand: if the system's not creating a better life, then we must create a better system.

It's time to make good on the promise of opportunity for all our citizens. Because as we enter the next American century, we need everyone on board. That's why this Administration is committed to break the logjam that's choking the progress of the poor -- broadening access to homeownership, jobs, and quality education.

Last November we moved towards those goals with the signing of the National Affordable Housing Act -- the most radical departure in Federal housing policy in two decades. It's core is HOPE, Homeownership and Opportunity for People Everywhere, ~~at~~ a revolutionary initiative that strikes out in a dramatically new direction, enabling public housing residents to manage and ultimately own their own homes.



Bertha Gilkey once said, "We don't want to be taken care of, we want to be trained how to take care of ourselves." She has taken that mission across America, lighting the fires in our battle to revolutionize public housing. She knows we can allow no pause in this crusade. When I took office, there were only 13 resident groups training to ~~become resident managers~~. Today, there are 100. With full congressional funding, there could be

explain?

turn public housing into private homes.

40,000 residents in some 400 public housing communities launched towards homeownership by the end of 1992.

Break { But we cannot conquer poverty if our foot soldiers can't afford the ammunition. That's why Congress must move swiftly to pass our Enterprise Zone and Jobs-Creation Act. By attracting new seed capital for small business start-ups, creating new incentives for entrepreneurial risk-taking, and reducing high effective tax rates on those who want work not welfare -- Enterprise Zones can turn poverty into potential, potential into prosperity.

But as we bring back the life to these areas' economies, we must restore the soul to their communities. ~~That's why we need~~ ^{would help us toward this goal.} The Community Opportunity Act of 1991. This legislation should empower communities to find ways to make Federal programs more responsive to individual, family, and community needs. It will help provide the means to shift power out of the heavy hand of the state, and into the hands that run the home.

It was once said that "destiny is not a matter of chance, it is a matter of choice; it is not a thing to be waited for, it is a thing to be achieved." The people of Cochran Gardens have made their choice. Now, they're making history. Thank you all very much for being here. God bless Cochran Gardens, and God bless the United States of America.

REVISED

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

REVISED

REVISED

Revised 5/1 3 pm

April 29, 1991

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHIEF OF STAFF
DEB ANDERSON
PAUL BATEMAN
TONY BENEDI
PHILLIP BRADY
ANDREW CARD
DAVID CARNEY
LINDA CASEY
BRUCE CAUGHMAN
CATHERINE COUGHLIN
BILLY DALE
DAVID DEMAREST
LAURIE FIRESTONE
MARLIN FITZWATER
BOYDEN GRAY
JOHN HERRICK
EDE HOLIDAY
TOM HUFFORD
RON KAUFMAN
BOBBIE KILBERG

WILLIAM KRISTOL
FRED MCCLURE
LAURA MELILLO
ROGER PORTER
PATTY PRESOCK
ED ROGERS
SUSAN PORTER ROSE
BRENT SCOWCROFT
SICHAN SIV
TONY SNOW
KATHY SUPER
PEGGY SWIFT
RICHARD TREFRY
CHASE UNTERMAYER
DAVID VALDEZ
ROSE ZAMARIA
USSS/PPD OPS
WHCA OPERATIONS
WHTV
MEDICAL UNIT
AIRLIFT OPS

THROUGH:

SIG ROGICH
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR
PUBLIC EVENTS AND INITIATIVES

FROM:

JAY PARMER 
SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT AND
DIRECTOR OF PRESIDENTIAL ADVANCE

SUBJECT:

TRIP OF THE PRESIDENT TO ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI,
ON FRIDAY, MAY 3, 1991

For your use and planning purposes, the attached is a preliminary outline schedule for the Trip of the President to St. Louis, Missouri on Friday, May 3, 1991. Please keep in mind the following information has not been finally approved and is subject to change.

Attachments

PRELIMINARY OUTLINE SCHEDULE

Friday, May 3, 1991

GUEST AND STAFF INSTRUCTIONS:

9:50 am Vans depart West Basement
en route Andrews Air Force
Base.

10:10 am Those with own transportation
should arrive Andrews Air Force
Base, Distinguished Visitor's
Lounge, at this time for
check in.

10:40 am MARINE ONE departs White House en route
Andrews Air Force Base.

(Flying Time: 10 Minutes)

10:50 am MARINE ONE arrives Andrews Air Force Base.

10:55 am AIR FORCE ONE departs Andrews Air Force Base en
(E.D.T.) route St. Louis, Missouri.

(Flying Time: 1 Hour 50 Minutes)
(Time Change: Back 1 Hour)
(Interchange: No)

11:45 am AIR FORCE ONE arrives Lambert - St. Louis
(C.D.T.) International Airport, St. Louis, Missouri.

11:50 am MOTORCADE departs Ramp Area en route
Cochran Gardens Community Center.

(Drive Time: 20 Minutes)

12:10 pm MOTORCADE arrives Cochran Gardens Community Center.

* NATIONAL TENANT MANAGEMENT BRIEFING
(12:15 pm - 12:30 pm)
- Expanded Pool Coverage

12:35 pm MOTORCADE departs Cochran Gardens Community Center en route Manhattan Courtyard.

(Drive Time: 5 Minutes)

12:40 pm MOTORCADE arrives Manhattan Courtyard.

* DROP BY VISIT TO COCHRAN GARDENS CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND AND TENANT UNITS
(12:45 pm - 12:55 pm)
- Expanded Pool Coverage

1:00 pm MOTORCADE departs Manhattan Courtyard en route New Haven Courtyard.

(Drive Time: 5 Minutes)

1:05 pm MOTORCADE arrives New Haven Courtyard.

1:30 * ADDRESS COCHRAN GARDENS COMMUNITY
(1:10 pm - 1:35 pm)
- Open Press
- Remarks

1:45 pm MOTORCADE departs New Haven Courtyard en route Lambert - St. Louis International Airport.

(Drive Time: 20 Minutes)

2:05 pm MOTORCADE arrives Lambert - St. Louis International Airport.

2:10 pm
(C.D.T.)

AIR FORCE ONE departs St. Louis, Missouri
en route Andrews Air Force Base.

(Flying Time: 1 Hour 40 Minutes)
(Interchange: None)
(Time Change: Ahead 1 Hour)

4:50 pm
(E.D.T.)

AIR FORCE ONE arrives Andrews Air Force Base.

4:55 pm

MARINE ONE departs Andrews Air Force Base en route
White House.

(Flying Time: 10 Minutes)

5:05 pm

MARINE ONE arrives White House.

m. 528

Gary Anderson
X
Nov 16

November 16, 1990

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Empowerment

- More recent empowerment
memo from Roger Patten

"An election that is about ideas and values is also about philosophy. And I have one. At the bright center is the individual. And radiating out from him or her is the family, the essential unit of closeness and of love....

From the individual to the family to the community, and on out to the town, to the church and school, and, still echoing out, to the county, the state, the nation -- each doing what it does well, and no more. And I believe that power must always be kept close to the individual -- close to the hands that raise the family and run the home....

And there is another tradition. And that is the idea of community -- a beautiful word with a big meaning. Though liberal democrats have an odd view of it. They see "community" as a limited cluster of interest groups, locked in odd conformity. In this view, the country waits passive while Washington sets the rules.

But that's not what community means -- not to me."

Vice President Bush's Acceptance Speech, August 18, 1988

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the people.

U.S. Constitution, Amendment X

We Republicans have struggled for sixty years to reconcile our belief in the importance of self-government and liberty with the emergence of the big-government welfare state. We have fought government and sometimes appeased it, but never embraced it and instilled it with our middle class sensibilities.

The President has embraced the belief that government should help people -- the premise behind the creation of the welfare state -- without embracing the status quo. Democrats who interpret the President's call for a kinder and gentler nation as a call for more of what they propose totally miss the point. The President does not question whether government should help: it should. Instead, the Bush Administration has focused on how

(c) 1990 Los Angeles Times, September 6, 1990

Bertha Gilkey started another tenant management success story at Cochran Gardens in St. Louis. Her family moved there 30 years ago when public housing was a way out of a slum and an attractive step up for poor families. But public housing took on a stigma as the working poor fled drugs, bullets, fear and filth.

Led by Gilkey, the Cochran Tenant Management Corp. imposes strict rules: No littering, loitering, spitting, walking on the grass or hosting guests longer than one month. Infractions produce eviction.

The tenants collect the rent, sweep the hallways, hire maintenance workers -- and provide 250 jobs through their catering firm, five day-care centers and cable television installation service for poor neighborhoods avoided by the traditional cable franchises. Those successes can be duplicated in other cities, Gilkey insists. To prove her point, she will run the training program at Nickerson Gardens herself.

Public housing is not beyond redemption. Strong tenant management coupled with adequate funds can again make it a source of pride.

TYPE: Editorial

(c) 1990 Los Angeles Times, September 5, 1990

Nickerson has hired Bertha Gilkey to run the sessions, which will be held three times a month for the next year. Gilkey, a seemingly irrepressible advocate of tenant rights, is known nationally for helping notoriously bad housing projects, such as Cochran Gardens in St. Louis, clean up by putting the people who live there in charge.

"I say to the 6 million people in public housing in this country . . . it is time to challenge the system. . . . Who can better manage us than us?" Gilkey said.

There are now more than a dozen public housing developments around the country that are run at least in part by tenants, and efforts are under way to start similar programs at more than 100 other housing projects.

Kemp also announced that the Los Angeles Housing Authority will get \$18 million this fiscal year to make improvements at its housing projects. Last year the authority received nearly \$15 million for repairs and improvements, but housing officials say it would take more than \$200 million to do all the improvement work they would like to do.

SUBJECT: NICKERSON GARDENS (HOUSING PROJECT); MANAGEMENT; LOW INCOME HOUSING -- LOS ANGELES; TENANTS RIGHTS; DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

LEVEL 1 - 6 OF 48 STORIES

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August 6, 1990

SECTION: Vol. 42; No. 15; Pg. 33

LENGTH: 2610 words

HEADLINE: Betting on Bush: for once, Republicans have a chance to uphold principle and advance their interests at the same time: wooing black voters back to the party of Abraham Lincoln by defeating a civil-rights bill

BYLINE: Bolick, Clint

BODY:

For once, Republicans have a chance to uphold principle and advance their interests at the same time: wooing black voters back to the party of Abraham Lincoln by defeating a civil-rights bill.

A MONTH or so ago, during a conversation about the Kennedy-Hawkins civil-rights bill, I made two bets with Arch Parsons of the Baltimore Sun. First, that President Bush will veto the bill if it is approved without

National Review (c) 1990 IAC

significant changes. Second, that he will win 18 per cent of the black vote in 1992 if he does. Washington pundits would assure Arch that he'll soon pocket a crisp dollar bill from the first bet, and a second one too if his memory hangs in for two years. Moreover, most pundits would insist that my first bet is inconsistent with my second. If Bush vetoes this civil-rights bill-or any civil-rights bill-he's doomed among black voters.

The reason I'm bucking conventional wisdom is that I sense that something important is happening beneath the surface in the debate over the civil-rights bill. That leads me to believe that if Bush plays his cards right, he will in fact double the black vote he received in 1988-a development that would make him invincible in 1992. And-again contrary to popular wisdom-playing his cards right requires him to veto the bill if Congress passes anything resembling the original version.

At a Rose Garden ceremony on May 17, Bush laid down three conditions for acceptance of a civil-rights bill: it can't require or encourage racial quotas, it can't be absurdly complex, and it can't reverse the due-process principle that a person is innocent until proven guilty. These are refreshing, common-sense principles that most Americans can easily support.

National Review (c) 1990 IAC

By definition, the bill's sponsors cannot satisfy those principles. The heart of the bill-provisions overturning six Supreme Court decisions of last year, especially the Wards Cove decision-violates all three. The motive behind it is to induce employers to adopt quotas voluntarily" by rigging the rules against them in statistics-based employment-discrimination cases. Under Wards Cove, plaintiffs may use statistics to prove discrimination, but they bear the burden of proof every step of the way. Under Kennedy-Hawkins, statistics by themselves would establish a presumption of discrimination, with employers bearing the burden of proving their innocence. Facing that threat, employers would almost always seek the safe harbor of informal quotas. No middle ground exists: to modify or overturn Wards Cove is to create an irresistible impulse for quotas. Of course, anyone who has read the newspapers lately has every right to be skeptical about Bush's resolve.

Scooping the Democrats

JUST AFTER the Supreme Court issued its Wards Cove ruling, the White House called me to ask for ideas for a Civil Rights Act of 1989." Amazingly, the Bush Administration wanted to scoop the Democrats. Hooray! I thought; our time has come at last, after eight years of the Reagan Administration's benign neglect of opportunities to fashion a genuine civilrights strategy based on individual rather than group rights.

National Review (c) 1990 IAC

I urged the White House to shift the terms of the debate. I suggested that the President immediately appoint a highly credible commission on economic mobility, headed by someone like Tom Kean (who received over half the black vote when he won re-election as governor of New Jersey in 1985). In terms of strengthening civil-rights laws, he could add compensatory and punitive damages for victims of egregious discrimination (as an alternative to quotas, which help not known victims but a whole class of presumed victims). Finally, and most importantly, he could urge legislative action on educational choice, economic opportunity, and anti-crime measures aimed at helping minorities.

As it turned out, Bush had plenty of time to devise such a strategy if he had wanted to, since it took Ted Kennedy and Ralph Neas, a top lobbyist for the civil-rights establishment, over half a year to come up with a bill to overturn the six Court rulings. But Bush did nothing, announcing that no action was necessary with respect to the recent Court decisions.

Meanwhile, several House Republicans got themselves into trouble by signing on to a bill by freshman Representative Tom Campbell, a bright and ambitious California Republican who wanted to establish his civil-rights credentials. He convinced several conservatives to join him, but when they realized they had been co-sponsoring a quota bill, they abandoned Campbell and demanded the White House provide an alternative. The Administration obliged, but the product did

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not quite meet the standards of a viable alternative. The Administration bill proposed to overturn two of the six decisions targeted by Kennedy-Hawkins, while keeping Wards Cove intact. But the way the Administration sliced it, the law would make monetary damages available to victims of racial harassment but not sexual harassment. No one—liberals, conservatives, or the business community—liked that alternative. The point man for the bill, Don Ayer, couldn't defend it, a factor that may have contributed to his recent departure from the Justice Department.

But the other side was having its problems too. After the Court's decisions came down last June 16, the NAACP's Ben Hooks threatened widespread civil disobedience and announced a mass march on Washington. When the troops failed to heed the call, Hooks was forced to reclassify the mass rally as a more modest "silent vigil," which registered barely a blip on the evening news.

It also took considerable effort by Neas and his allies to satisfy the diverse strands of the civil-rights lobby, with constituency groups ranging from minorities to feminists to labor unions, all focusing on different objectives which Neas had to put into a single, saleable package. Once introduced, the bill failed to generate much enthusiasm. Until the inexplicable decision by Senator Jack Danforth (R., Mo.) on May 17 to join the bill, sponsors included only liberals and the usual maverick Republicans. Southern Democrats were lying

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low, perhaps haunted by the quota specter, which could bleed away white votes. By mid June, the bill had fewer than fifty Senate sponsors, a very low number for a civil-rights bill.

Re-Enter the President

ENTER the President again. On May 14, he announced through his spokesman, Marlin Fitzwater, that he wanted to sign a civilrights bill, and that his differences with Kennedy-Hawkins were minor. He scheduled three days of meetings with civil-rights leaders, along with a sprinkling of dissenters. The Washington Post reported that he was ready to sign the bill, sending conservatives and the business community into despair.

Both sides were invited to the Rose Garden ceremony on Thursday of that week; but when the rhetorical smoke had cleared, it was the bill's supporters who were devastated. Instead of endorsing the bill, Bush reiterated his opposition to quotas and implied that he would veto the bill if his core principles were not satisfied.

Of course, the President could do another pirouette and sign the bill. His Rose Garden reversal, apparently the result of a last-minute blitz by Attorney General Richard Thornburgh and other top advisors, may prove little more than

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a negotiating ploy. He clearly still wants to sign a bill and subsequently has negotiated with Kennedy, leading most commentators to suggest he'll sign the bill with merely cosmetic alterations. But I don't think so.

If George Bush caves in on quotas, he will risk losing support among white voters and creating additional constituencies for the likes of David Duke. So Bush needs to appear firm. But if he vetoes the bill, won't he write off any chance of increasing his share of the black vote? Here's where the pundits have it wrong.

Ben Hooks and his allies have declared the civil-rights bill a litmus test" for Bush, and threaten he'll get no black votes if he vetoes it. Ronald Reagan capitulated to such threats on several occasions (such as housing and voting rights), and he still didn't end up with many black votes. Richard Nixon tried a different approach--outliberaling the liberals on minority setasides and the like--and he didn't get many black votes either. Maybe President Bush has learned something from this.

The answer may be in the second half of his Rose Garden speech--the half the media didn't report. Bush called for a new vision on civil rights based on individual empowerment," consisting of efforts to help poor people help themselves. He spoke specifically about education vouchers, tenant management

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and ownership of public housing, and day care.

It was just a sketch, but it could turn into a real strategy, and one that could finally break the sixty-year Democratic lock on the black vote. If this seems a bold prediction, consider the objective: we're not talking about competing for a majority of black votes, at least not initially, but rather for a mere doubling of the 9 per cent of the black vote that Bush received in 1988. That's only about one out of every ten blacks who didn't vote for him the first time. Assuming Bush can hold onto most of his white voter base (and a quota-bill veto would help), this modest increase in black support is all he'd need virtually to ensure his reelection by a wide margin; if Republicans generally could duplicate the feat, it could lead to control of the S enate.

A Nod to Hooks

THIS WOULD represent a major shift in approach. Bush would continue to give occasional nods to Ben Hooks, avoiding the remoteness, hostility even, of the Reagan era. But Bush--or at least his advisors--seems to realize that Hooks needs him more than vice versa. The civil-rights establishment responds to every problem with a new bill, and if it can't get one passed, it has nothing to offer its constituents. Likewise, if Bush merely meets Hooks's present demands, he's got nothing over the Democrats, who will always be able to offer more in the

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way of government regulations and handouts. Hence, Bush should take his case directly to black voters, offering them policies that will really make a difference to their lives.

As with many political shifts, this one started with the academics. Scholars such as Thomas Sowell, Walter Williams, and Charles Murray all condemned the welfare state and raceconscious affirmative action as doing nothing to help blacks make economic advances. Their indictment of raceconscious measures was echoed by converts—James Coleman, Nathan Glazer, Morris Abram, Glenn Loury and later by others, including William Julius Wilson and Harvard law professor Randall Kennedy, who remain unabashedly liberal.

In particular, Wilson's *The Truly Disadvantaged* (1987) demonstrated that race preferences helped mainly those who didn't need the help, while leaving unaddressed problems of economic mobility and development of human capital. Wilson's book made it acceptable for thoughtful liberals to question race-conscious strategies as a solution to problems of minorities.

Kennedy-Hawkins has run head on into this burgeoning skepticism. Commentators across the political spectrum are recognizing the bill as a turning point, presenting a clear choice between continuing down the road of quotas or embarking on a new direction for civil rights. William Raspberry, Charles

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Krauthammer, Edwin Yoder, Stuart Taylor of *Legal Times*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, and *The New Republic*, all of them sympathetic to civil-rights aims, have each editorialized against the bill or its underlying logic. Likewise, the moderate Democratic Leadership Council, meeting this spring in New Orleans, explicitly endorsed the goal of equal opportunity as opposed to equality of outcomes, thus rejecting the premise that lies at the heart of Kennedy-Hawkins.

Meanwhile, this skepticism is manifesting itself at the grassroots. The NAACP's membership rolls are hemorrhaging—it lost a hundred thousand over the past ten years. Were it not for ever-increasing corporate contributions, the venerable organization would have to close up shop. are flourishing. Though typically nonideological, they are passionately committed to individual autonomy and are therefore potentially ripe for Republican courtship. Exemplified by Robert Woodson's National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise, these groups reject welfare and quotas in favor of individual and community initiative. A new civil-rights bill means absolutely nothing to these people, but such initiatives as enterprise zones, tenant management, and education vouchers can mean a great deal.

My own organization, Mark Center for Civil Rights, is a legal arm of the empowerment movement, challenging regulatory barriers to entrepreneurial opportunities and defending empowerment efforts where they are attacked by

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entrenched interests. After two years in this business, I am struck by the potential for at least modest political realignment.

Bertha Gilkey, a tenant management activist in St. Louis, used to be a Black Panther. Now she sees liberals as her principal adversaries and Republicans as allies. In Wisconsin, black state Representative Polly Williams recently pushed through the nation's first-ever education-voucher program, which (if it survives legal challenge) will provide one thousand poor Milwaukee children the chance to attend high-quality nonsectarian private schools. Mrs. Williams, Jesse Jackson's Wisconsin campaign coordinator, joined forces with conservative Republican Governor Tommy Thompson to overcome efforts by white liberals to defeat the voucher proposal. She leaves little doubt whom she'll support in the upcoming gubernatorial campaign. Some in the Bush Administration (such as Housing and Urban Development Secretary Jack Kemp, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Chairman Evan Kemp, and EEOC Vice Chairman Rosahe Silberman) and their supporters in Congress (Representatives Steve Bartlett and Newt Gingrich) have taken note of the political potential of empowerment. My bets with Arch Parsons are based on the premise that Bush has noticed it too.

Though any civil-rights bill has important symbolic value among blacks and therefore carries significant veto risks, this bill, because of its complexity, simply won't set the grassroots on fire. If Bush ends up going toe to toe with

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Ben Hooks in the inner city, for once it will be the Republicans who offer the tangibles (vouchers, tenant management, etc.) while the civilrights establishment argues about abstractions (burdens of proof, statistical inferences, and so on).

Thus far, many civil-rights groups are ambivalent about empowerment initiatives. The head of the Milwaukee NAACP chapter, for instance, has joined the teachers' unions in taking Polly Williams's education-choice program to court—a lawsuit my group is actively resisting on behalf of black parents and their children. This leaves the road clear for Bush to emerge as the "empowerment" President.

REPUBLICANS in recent years have run away from this issue, which is odd since it is a no-lose issue. For once, Republican principles and interests are coinciding, and that offers the prospect for a considerable change in the political landscape.

My own objective is to promote a new agenda; my principal venue is the courtroom, not the legislature. The political ramifications are secondary to me. But if George Bush decides to carry the empowerment banner, it might just advance the cause by twenty years or so—and quite possibly bring America closer to making good on its commitment of opportunity for all Americans.

→ MLK, cash in the check

(c) 1990 The New York Times, July 1, 1990

Bertha Gilkey, the tenant advocate, said this larger role could include everything from tenant patrols to job-skills training for those residents "the system has written off," day care so that single mothers can work, health clinics and transportation services to get people to their jobs.

But the reason many public-housing tenants do not get involved, Ms. Gilkey said, is that the American system perpetuates "myths about poor people" and "robs them of their self-esteem."

"We automatically assume that because people are on welfare and live in public housing, that automatically means they sell drugs and don't care," she said at a daylong conference, "Community Empowerment To Combat Drugs," at the Thomas H. Slater Center.

"We don't want to be taken care of, we want to be trained how to take care of ourselves," she said during one of two keynote addresses. Ms. Gilkey began fighting for tenants rights as a teen-ager, soon after she and her family moved into a St. Louis public-housing project 25 years ago.

250 in the Audience

(c) 1990 GANNETT NEWS SERVICE, May 26, 1990

In St. Louis, Bertha Gilkey is head of the Cochran Tenant Management Corp., which is transforming an 800-unit complex into a neighborhood, not a public housing project.

Her group is now promoting other kinds of economic empowerment, including a catering service, day care centers, a cable television installation service for public housing developments and a transportation service for workers.

"It's painful for me to say this as a diehard Democrat, but the Republicans are on the right track," said Gilkey, 41, a single parent and community organizer.

As conservatives pay attention to poverty, they point to the failures of Democratic-backed programs over the past 25 years, the three or even four generations of families on welfare and the "poverty industry" that has been created to support these programs.

The efforts come as the GOP, under the leadership of Republican National Committee chairman Lee Atwater, is reaching out to blacks, women and other constituents like the poor who traditionally vote Democratic, not Republican, when they go to the polls.

LEVEL 1 - 10 OF 48 STORIES

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April 15, 1990, Sunday, Home Edition

SECTION: Part A; Page 4; Column 1; National Desk

LENGTH: 2284 words

HEADLINE: CHANCE TO BUY INTO THE AMERICAN DREAM;

HOUSING: TENANTS OF PUBLIC PROJECTS WANT TO PURCHASE THEIR HOMES. CRITICS SAY THE PLAN ALLOWS GOVERNMENT TO DUCK ITS RESPONSIBILITY TO THE POOR.

BYLINE: By ERIC HARRISON, TIMES STAFF WRITER

DATELINE: ST. LOUIS

BODY:

When the massive, crime-ridden Pruitt-Igoe housing project was torn down here in 1972 -- "the collapse of liberalism," one columnist called it -- its destruction became a graphic symbol of the failure of the nation's public-housing policy.

almost 2 decades ago

(c) 1990 Los Angeles Times, April 15, 1990

Now it's the conservatives' turn.

In 1973, two of the projects in the same North Side neighborhood as Pruitt-Igoe became among the first in the country to experiment with tenant management.

Today, tenants of one of those projects are trying to take it a step further. Having succeeded in lowering the crime rate and improving the quality of life in their sprawling, red-brick, low-rise complex, they now are seeking to buy their homes from the government.

It is a controversial concept hatched during the Ronald Reagan years that now has become a centerpiece of President Bush's housing initiatives. Jack Kemp, Housing and Urban Development secretary who as a congressman sponsored the first legislation allowing tenants to buy their units in the 1970s, has been trumpeting tenant homeownership around the country. He calls it "a very exciting chapter of a new civil rights revolution," an innovative way to let poor people have a taste of the American dream.

Opponents denounce the plan as little more than an attempt to duck the government's responsibility to house the poor. "Foolishness," Rep. William L. Clay (D-Mo.) calls it. "It's just another big scam that the federal government

(c) 1990 Los Angeles Times, April 15, 1990

is perpetrating on the American public."

The plan, which is being attempted in several cities, essentially is to sell public-housing projects that already are being managed by tenants to tenant-led corporations. The corporations then would be allowed to sell the individual units to tenants who could use government subsidies to pay mortgages.

In St. Louis, tenant organizations have chosen the 658-unit Carr Square housing project for purchase. Under a proposal now awaiting approval by HUD, the complex's aging 52 two- and three-story buildings would be extensively renovated by HUD at an estimated cost of \$33 million before being sold to the tenant management corporation for \$1.

An adjacent high-rise housing project would be destroyed under the plan. This upgrading of the neighborhood and the new stability of Carr Square tenants, it is believed, would make it easier to attract economic development projects to the area. The city already has plans to build a \$24-million business and industrial park on the 57-acre Pruitt-Igoe site.

But some critics say the plan actually will harm the people it is intended to benefit.

(c) 1990 Los Angeles Times, April 15, 1990

"It is incomprehensible to think that those who can barely afford food, clothing, medical care, transportation and other basic necessities can afford the expenses of homeownership," Clay said before a House subcommittee studying the issue last month. "For most people -- especially those with no place to live -- tenant ownership of public housing is a contradiction in terms."

According to a recent HUD inspector general audit, the average annual income at Carr Square is only \$6,500.

The study, issued in October, urged that HUD re-evaluate the feasibility of the program in light of low public-housing incomes. "In some cases, improvement of the housing conditions of low-income tenants may be a more attainable and desirable goal than homeownership," the report said.

Tenant leaders say incomes will increase after a resident corporation takes control because tenants will be put to work renovating the project. But Clay notes that years of tenant management and job-training programs in Carr Square still have not raised average incomes there. He has vowed to fight the plan in Congress and has asked the General Accounting Office and other federal agencies to look into the sales proposal.

(c) 1990 Los Angeles Times, April 15, 1990

Even some supporters of the homeownership idea caution that it is not the solution for the nation's public-housing ills.

"It's not a panacea," said Thomas Costello, a former St. Louis housing authority director and now a private developer. "It's only a small answer to the problem." It is an answer, though, that the Bush Administration is intent on pursuing. Tenant management and ownership of public housing was a linchpin of the \$4.1-billion housing package Bush unveiled in November.

A number of tenant groups are preparing proposals to take over their projects, but only two so far have formally applied to HUD. A Washington, D.C., housing project, Kenilworth-Parkside, is further along than Carr Square. The tenant management corporation there hopes to acquire the project this year.

Even so, details on how tenant homeownership would work and how the concept may be applied beyond the first targeted housing projects remain unclear.

Particulars of the Carr Square proposal have been changed a number of times and the plan still has not been finalized. An early Carr Square proposal drafted by the firm for which Costello now is an executive, McCormack, Baron & Associates, was rejected by HUD because, among other things, it provided a 15-year transition period before an individual tenant family could buy its

(c) 1990 The Heritage Foundation, March 8, 1990

St. Louis, Missouri. A few miles from Pruitt-Igoe's rubble, Cochran Gardens has been transformed from, as the New York Times reported, "a squalid den for narcotics dealers" n3 where garbage was flung from windows and residents urinated in the hallways, into "a model of what tenant-managed public housing can be." n4 Bertha Gilkey, head of the 14-year-old tenant management corporation, says she first organized residents "to build accountability and standards of self-esteem" by scheduling clean-up days and painting squads to restore run-down units in the vandal-plagued project. According to Valdus Turner, who heads Cochran's summer youth employment program, "the housing authority had just said, 'we're through with it' . . . we had to just get in there and do it ourselves because no one else would." Since then, Cochran Gardens has done more than simply control crime, renovate buildings, and enforce high standards of behavior. The tenant management corporation has employed over 250 residents in a \$400,000 a year catering business, a janitorial service, a cable television installation company, and a health clinic, which serves the area's homeless as well as project residents. Resident volunteers deliver hot meals to elderly tenants at home, and a van pool owned by Cochran's resident management corporation transports residents to jobs and neighborhood stores. During a recent visit, HUD Secretary Kemp inspected Cochran's newest child care center, which at one time was a vacant unit used as a drug dealers' hideout.

(c) 1989, The Boston Globe, November 5, 1989

The keynote speaker at yesterday's conference was activist Bertha Gilkey, executive director of Urban Women Inc.

Gilkey, who has assisted tenant groups in Philadelphia, Camden, N.J., Milwaukee and Chicago, said tenant issues for low- and moderate-income residents across the United States have gained more significance as the supply of affordable housing dries up.

"It is time for tenants to challenge the system," said Gilkey, a native of St. Louis. She said housing is scarce for large families and those on the bottom of the economic ladder.

"We have to train poor people who now live in this country to have some involvement with controlling their own destiny," Gilkey added. "It is time for us, the poor and the indigent, to participate to keep their properties well managed, to keep the undesirables and drug pushers out and to become organized."

LEVEL 1 - 1 OF 48 STORIES

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February, 1991

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HEADLINE: Fighting the last war: spurred by Jack Kemp, the Bush administration
is preparing to launch a new war on poverty

BYLINE: Lemann, Nicholas

BODY:

Fighting the

Last War

THE WAR ON POVERTY may turn out to have been more important historically for
the political reaction it provoked than for what it actually did. The agency
created to carry out the War on Poverty, the Office of Economic Opportunity,

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was fairly small, modestly funded (its highest-ever annual budget was \$ 1.9
billion--under Richard Nixon), and short-lived (it existed for barely a decade).
Nevertheless, politicians have been running against the War on Poverty almost
from the moment it began. The year that Lyndon Johnson started the War on
Poverty, 1964, was also the year that Ronald Reagan emerged as a national
politician, because of his speechmaking in Barry Goldwater's presidential
campaign; Reagan attacked the War on Poverty then, and he's still attacking it
now. In his recently published memoirs Reagan describes his vehement objection
to the War on Poverty as having been one of the main things on his mind as he
was deciding whether or not to run for President. "Hundreds of billions were
spent on poverty programs, and the plight of the poor grew more painful," he
writes. "They had spent billions on programs that made people worse off."

Oddly, though, there is now a movement to declare war on poverty again. Its
leader is Jack Kemp, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. After he
dropped out of the 1988 presidential race, Kemp began calling for a
"conservative war on poverty." During the press conference at which his
appointment to HUD was announced, Kemp said, "I told my friends on Capitol Hill,
both Democrat and Republican alike, I want to wage war on poverty." Last fall,
after some spirited politicking inside the Administration, President Bush put
Kemp in charge of an Economic Empowerment Task Force, which is supposed to
formulate a new federal anti-poverty policy.

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It appears now that the historical importance of the Bush Administration's war on poverty will also not lie in what it actually does. It probably won't receive from the President either the rhetorical commitment or the significant new budget authority that the original version got from Johnson. But it does provide a way of gauging the stance of the Republican Party--the presidential party, and so the likely source of major government initiatives--on social-welfare issues. During the period after Bush appointed the Economic Empowerment Task Force and before its first official meeting, I spoke with all its leading figures. I was struck by the extent to which these conservatives, determined to avoid the mistakes of a liberal program that in their view failed miserably, were reliving with an almost eerie exactitude the early machinations that preceded the War on Poverty.

THE MOST SIGNIFICANT flurry of social-policy making in the Reagan Administration came at the very beginning, in the form of David Stockman's cuts in federal spending on domestic programs. Stockman's great cause--a failed one, as it turned out--was eliminating what he called "the social pork barrel," a system under which government money was distributed according to the political power of the beneficiaries rather than need. After Stockman, the best-known conservative in the field of social policy during the 1980s was probably Charles Murray, the author of the book *Losing Ground*, who argued that social programs, especially welfare, had caused poverty to increase, and so should be

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eliminated.

Although this was similar to the view of poverty programs that Reagan has expressed throughout his career, Murray had very little discernible influence on the Reagan Administration--there was no attempt to dismantle the welfare state after *Losing Ground* was published--and, of course, neither did Stockman after the first year. Instead, Reagan surrounded himself with a group of people who had worked for him when he was governor of California, whose guiding principle was that the federal government shouldn't "micro-manage" social-welfare policy: it should hold overall spending down and let the states decide what to do. The California group might have agreed with Stockman's and Murray's views, but to them it was far more important to limit the power of the federal government than to make it operate according to conservative principles.

For most of Reagan's second term a man named Charles Hobbs, who had worked for Reagan in Sacramento in the early 1970s, was the member of the White House staff in charge of social policy. Hobbs's dream was to persuade Congress to pass a bill that would give the states power to experiment with welfare programs. In 1986 the bill was killed in committee, and Hobbs was forced to accept a pale substitute--an organization inside the White House called the Low Income Opportunity Board, which encouraged the states to apply for waivers from federal rules so that they could institute their own welfare-reform plans.

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Almost half the states participated, but most of their plans were, as Hobbs told me recently, "incremental," not revisions of the welfare system. He continued, "To tell the truth, I had to sit and bite my tongue for two years because I thought they were being too timid."

When Bush took office, having signaled for months that he would display more compassion toward the poor than Reagan had, he decided to keep the Low Income Opportunity Board going. Hobbs left the White House in the spring of 1989, and another member of the White House staff, William Roper, who had many other responsibilities, took over responsibility for the board. In September of 1989 Bush asked it to develop, in the words of a White House memo, "the principles of a conservative anti-poverty agenda." The board began to hold monthly meetings, attended mostly by second-level officials of the domestic Cabinet departments, to discuss ideas. To judge from the paperwork generated by the board, the main new initiative it discussed was what one memo calls "large-scale community intervention in high poverty areas," which sounds a lot like the main new initiative of the War on Poverty, the community-action program.

Last spring William Roper left the White House, and authority over the board passed to a member of the Council of Economic Advisers. The impression that Bush wasn't doing much to bring into being a "kinder and gentler nation" was sharply underscored by a story by Robert Pear that appeared on the front page

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of The New York Times on July 6, 1990, under the headline "WHITE HOUSE SPURNS EXPANSION OF NATION'S ANTI-POVERTY EFFORTS." After describing the failure of the Low Income Opportunity Board to come up with anything that the Domestic Policy Council, the group of Cabinet members it reported to, would approve, Pear wrote, "A White House official summarized the upshot this way: 'Keep playing with the same toys. But let's paint them a little shinier.'"

Kemp was already rankled by the mood of caution that prevailed in the Domestic Policy Council. He had long since personally declared war on poverty, but there was no visible Administration-wide effort to show for it. He had privately urged Bush and John Sununu, the White House chief of staff, to make "war on poverty" a presidential catchphrase, but they refused, not wanting to imply that they were going to create big new government programs. (Finally, Bush did slip a war-on-poverty reference into a speech.) The meetings of the Domestic Policy Council "went poorly for Secretary Kemp," says Thomas Humbert, one of his aides at HUD. "He wanted to start immediately with the new war on poverty. He had the themes and designs. That was turned down." Other Cabinet secretaries told Kemp that if the Administration publicly raised poverty as an issue, it would only help the Democrats. On May 25, 1990, Kemp expressed his reaction to the proceedings of the Domestic Policy Council in a letter to Richard Thornburgh, the Attorney General, who is its chairman. "I am absolutely convinced that we are at a moment of critical mass," he wrote. "It is past

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time for the Administration to aggressively highlight a new comprehensive anti-poverty agenda. . . ."

The New York Times story was based on a memo drafted for the Domestic Policy Council, sketching out a series of non-actions such as expanding the Low Income Opportunity Board and further studying federal anti-poverty programs. This memo was not at all what Kemp and his aides had in mind. "This is awful!" one of them wrote in the margin of a copy. The Times story gave them an opening. Kemp was in London when it appeared; he immediately called the White House to complain, and was assured that no decision had been made to drop the idea of an anti-poverty offensive. When he got back to Washington, he wrote Thornburgh another testy letter, suggesting that a Cabinet member be put in charge of the anti-poverty effort, and warning that unless the effort was juiced up, there would be more bad publicity. "The Administration has already been criticized in the press for studying the problem to death and throwing up its hands," he wrote. "Here we are asking the President to endorse a war on poverty that will produce, in a year's time, a report, an analysis, and, perhaps, some proposals. Meanwhile, what's going on in our neighborhoods and on the streets?"

Evidently Kemp's views won out. By the beginning of September the Low Income Opportunity Board had quietly slipped beneath the waves, Bush had approved the establishment of the Economic Empowerment Task Force as a replacement body,

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with a Cabinet secretary as its head, and Kemp had beaten out the secretaries of Labor, Education, and Health and Human Services to get the job. There was a lot going on here. To use one of Kemp's favorite locutions, it's no secret that Jack Kemp has presidential ambitions. He was known to have become restless at HUD. Being assigned to run the task force, a job Kemp sees as highly visible and demanding, keeps him on the reservation.

Inside the White House there was some desire to prove the Times story wrong--to counter, for reasons of election-year political expediency and East Coast Republican gentility, the perception that the Bush Administration didn't care about the poor. In particular, a White House aide named James Pinkerton, who is in charge of trying to shore up Bush as regards what the President calls "the vision thing," became involved in anti-poverty policy after the story. Pinkerton, who is the son of two liberal academics, cuts a figure in Washington today a little like that of Stockman in the late 1970s, or of Representative Newt Gingrich in the early 1980s: he is a young intellectual convert to conservatism who wants to create for the Republican Party an overarching concept so compelling that it will remake American politics as completely as the New Deal did. Pinkerton calls his concept the New Paradigm. Its essential tenet is that bureaucracy is a spent force in the world and is being replaced by decentralized, market-driven forms of organization. Last spring Bush gave a speech about the New Paradigm.

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In lobbying for the Economic Empowerment Task Force, Pinkerton joined with two White House aides who have more-conventional responsibilities in the management of domestic policy, Charles Kolb and Richard Porter. A new anti-poverty initiative appealed to Pinkerton as a chance to kill two birds with one stone. It could help draw below-median-income voters into the Republican Party and also be a proving ground for the New Paradigm, by supporting anti-bureaucratic poverty-fighting ideas like school and housing vouchers and tax-free "enterprise zones" in urban slums. Although the task force has members from throughout the government, the two key clusters of people involved in it are the group on the White House staff and Kemp and his circle of advisers at HUD--all of whom are uninterested in the Reagan Administration cause of getting the Federal government out of social-policy making. Kemp is strongly committed to using the federal government as an instrument of social-policy making, because he believes that the solution to most of the country's problems lies in changing the income-tax code in various ways, which state and local governments can't do.

THE WORD "empowerment" conjures up visions of SDS manifestos, campus demonstrations, the Black Power movement--all the things the Republican Party ran against so successfully for so many years. But now it is the mantra of the Bush Administration regarding poverty. That a catchphrase of the left could have mutated into a catchphrase of the right is only one of many examples of

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the way in which discussions of poverty and race in America tend to encourage elaborate rhetorical posturing.

All the essential actors in the formation of the Economic Empowerment Task Force make it clear that inner-city black ghettos are their central concern; they don't talk much about Appalachian hollows or shantytowns along the Mexican border. Even to raise as a possibility new government programs aimed at the ghettos runs the risk of offending two constituencies: blacks, who might feel they are being colonized and treated as deficient, and conservative members of Congress, who aren't inclined to support new social-welfare spending. "Empowerment" neatly evades both problems.

For many blacks the word has a resonance it simply lacks for most whites. The standard white-ethnic mythology of intergenerational progress from the slums to the suburbs doesn't include anyone's having become empowered, but African-American history and psychology is bound up with the idea of throwing off the bonds of oppression and powerlessness. Robert Woodson, a black conservative who runs the National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise, a think tank, is the person most responsible for popularizing the word "empowerment" in conservative circles. Many of the white conservatives who use it (like Kemp, who keeps a bust of Lincoln on his desk at HUD) believe that the Republican Party can attract a substantial black constituency. The social-welfare

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consensus of the early sixties foundered on the charge that white officialdom's attitude toward the ghettos consisted of "blaming the victim," and the fear of appearing to victim-blame has haunted social-policy makers ever since. The Economic Empowerment Task Force is determined to avoid this problem, even if that means explaining itself in language that will seem esoteric to most whites. James Pinkerton says, "People like me don't need to be empowered. The black in the ghetto has to be empowered. If it means nothing to ninety percent of the American people, so be it."

"Empowerment" sends a different signal to the conservative audience. It implies that the ghetto poor are going to be encouraged to solve their own problems, rather than to become wards of the state--and therefore that the spending is going to be modest. Also, conservatives are intensely aware that there are two main strains in modern conservatism, one extremely unpopular with voters, the other extremely popular. The unpopular strain is austere, pessimistic about human nature and the wisdom of the public's will, and prone to viewing government as a bulwark against disorder, rather than as a solver of all the world's problems. The popular strain--Reagan's strain, and also Kemp's--is anti-establishment, ebulliently optimistic, and full of trust in the common man. The Economic Empowerment Task Force will be firmly in this camp, whose catechism is that the American ghettos, Eastern Europe, and the poorer parts of Latin America have an essential similarity: all are places where the heavy hand of

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the state has prevented the basic abilities of people from showing themselves. Pinkerton talks about the need for perestroika in the ghettos. Stuart Butler, the chief poverty expert at the Heritage Foundation (which was Kemp's resting place, briefly, before he got the HUD job), uses the slogan "Trust people, mistrust bureaucracy."

Sometimes, in conversation, some of these conservatives hint that government might play some role in the lives of the poor other than simply getting out of the way. Joseph Schiff, the assistant secretary of HUD in charge of public housing, who spent the late 1980s running HUD's Louisville office and so was not in close touch with the conservative think tanks in Washington as they developed the new line, told me that he wants to provide public-housing tenants with a range of special social services. When I asked him how this constituted empowerment, he seemed momentarily flustered, and then got with the program and said that the kinds of social services he had in mind were different from "traditional social work, which as I understand it is more welfare." Kemp's aide Thomas Humbert told me, "There is another side to the story we don't have the authority to do--preaching values. Conservatives don't do that well. Jesse Jackson does it well. A sense of, 'You can do it, you can make it, the dream's alive, keep your family together,' and so on. But that's not Secretary Kemp's role--he's a white suburbanite who grew up middle class." Practically speaking, there is quite often a blurring of the intellectual distinction between

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programs that empower and programs that acculturate; job training, for example, could be put under either rubric. But in the stance it strikes for purposes of Washington debate, the Bush Administration is completely for the former and against the latter.

THE ECONOMIC Empowerment Task Force didn't meet for the first time until November 15, so it is still in the early stage of its deliberations--the stage at which domestic agencies and departments are asked to submit poverty-fighting ideas. It is not difficult to guess what the end result will be, though. The task force is under instructions to be "budget-neutral," so it has to propose a rearrangement of, rather than an increase in, government spending. Charles Kolb, the White House aide who actually runs the task force, insists that money for new programs can be found by eliminating the waste in old ones. "The gross dollars are enormous," he says. "The money's getting raked off somewhere." It usually turns out that what appears to be waste is actually payroll or benefits, which are very difficult to cut, so it's unlikely that the conservative war on poverty will be budgetarily substantial. Both Kemp and Kolb say, too, that the task force probably won't propose a major piece of legislation along the lines of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, because the Administration doesn't trust Congress. As Stuart Butler puts it, by submitting legislation "you lose control and get into a bidding war."

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Whatever the task force does propose will probably be some version of Kemp's poverty-fighting agenda, on which the key items are substantial tax cuts for the working poor, tenant management of housing projects, housing and education vouchers, and enterprise zones, all of which fit comfortably under the rubric of empowerment. Like Reagan, Kemp is drawn more to anecdotes than to statistics. Overall, the ghettos have been tremendous population-losers over the past two decades, but Kemp has a circle of community-leader acquaintances, most of them middle-aged black women, whose success at turning around their neighborhoods has convinced him that all ghettos can be made into thriving, crime-free ethnic neighborhoods through the application of economic incentives by the government. It is difficult to imagine that when the Economic Empowerment Task Force goes public, Kemp won't extol the good works of Kimi Gray in Washington and Bertha Gilkey in East St. Louis and call for a nationwide application of their ideas, since he does so in almost every speech he gives.

The impolite question to ask about Kemp's uplifting vision is whether the intellectual foundation on which it rests--that all the problems of the ghettos were created by liberal government programs that began in the mid-1960s--is plausible. Kemp himself, when pressed on this point, is willing to concede that all was not well in the ghettos even before the War on Poverty began, and that many blacks have been helped by government programs since then. The true-believer conservative position on the War on Poverty can be more readily

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found in the writings of Stuart Butler, who is close to Kemp. He has written that the War on Poverty committed three crucial errors: first, "policymaking was centralized in Washington"; second, "the idea of 'welfare rights' guided many programs"; and third, "the War on Poverty assumed that the best way to help people was to send trained professionals into communities to help the poor." The White House memorandum that led to the creation of the Economic Empowerment Task Force subscribes to the Butler theory. It says, for example, "Although it alleviated some of the worst symptoms of poverty, the war on poverty could not succeed in reducing poverty because it was based on a philosophy of redistributionism and promoted dependency."

Actually, none of these charges against the War on Poverty is true. Rather than being centralized in Washington, the War on Poverty had as its biggest program community action, which was carried out by quasi-independent organizations in poor neighborhoods. Rather than promoting welfare, the War on Poverty explicitly rejected it, in part because Lyndon Johnson hated the idea of government handouts. (It was the Nixon Administration that made increasing cash and in-kind assistance to the poor the centerpiece of its anti-poverty policy.) And rather than relying on what conservatives now call "the service-provider industry," the War on Poverty went to some lengths to shut it out; the community-action program was supposed to be substantially staffed by poor people rather than social workers. Some of the slogans now being discussed in the

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Administration--for example, "a hand up, not a handout"--were used in the War on Poverty. Whatever the failures of the War on Poverty now appear to have been, most of its political troubles at the time stemmed from its heavy reliance on ghetto community-development groups, which tended to get a bad press and to engender the enmity of conventional elected politicians, who thought that federal anti-poverty money should be spent through them.

THE MORE INTERESTING conclusion to draw from a comparison of the two wars on poverty is that their similarities bespeak some fundamental truth about social-welfare-policy making in America. The Bush Administration's war on poverty is now where the War on Poverty was in the early fall of 1963. That was the last time until now that the White House was occupied by the son of a wealthy and prominent father, a graduate of an Ivy League college, and a Navy combat veteran of the Second World War; in keeping with his background, that President, like this one, was primarily interested in foreign affairs. John F. Kennedy was being pushed toward poverty-fighting by an ambitious Cabinet member who had developed a strong interest in the black ghettos and who had formulated his own daring agenda for solving their problems--his brother Robert. Bush is being pushed by Kemp. The impetus for the explorations of anti-poverty policy in 1963 was that Kennedy was proposing an income-tax cut and was worried that he would appear unfair if he didn't also do something for the poor; Kemp and Bush have both been drawn first to tax-cutting and then to anti-poverty policy, as

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a way of providing balance.

The War on Poverty began with the convening of an interagency task force like the Economic Empowerment Task Force. This proved to be a cumbersome vehicle for policy-making, and most of its time was taken up in squabbling among Cabinet departments. (In the Bush Administration the squabbling began, very publicly, the day after the first meeting of the task force, when Richard Darman, the budget director, gave a speech making fun of the New Paradigm, which infuriated Kemp and Pinkerton.) Eventually the poverty-fighters, desperate to cut through the bureaucracy and find a fresh new idea that didn't cost too much, settled on trying to revive the ghettos by "empowering" their residents. That will probably be the outcome this time around, too, only the empowerment will be economic rather than political.

Had John Kennedy not been assassinated, the War on Poverty would never have been declared. If Bush's presidency proceeds pretty much as it has so far, there is little likelihood that Bush will make any vast Johnson-style promise to eliminate ghetto poverty either. That would be more in Jack Kemp's line. It appears that the natural, ordinary operations of the federal government do not encourage major reforms in race relations. Instead, normal procedure in centrist administrations is for the existence of obvious racial problems to produce some pangs of conscience or duty, which are followed by a search for a

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course of action that won't be very expensive or disruptive. Breakthroughs in the area of race, the most difficult issue in American domestic life, have in the past been wrenching experiences for the whole society. That is why they have been associated with times of national crisis and Presidents of immoderate temperament--not times like these, or Presidents like this one.

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WH Advance
Fax # 202 456-2820.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>TEL: #</u>
Patricia Conrad	WH Advance	202-456-7565
LED Tomell	"	"
Brian Montgomery (press)	"	"
Way Muckerman (press)	"	"
Peggy Dooley	WH Speechwriting	202/456-7750
Joe Watkins	WH Public Liaison	202/456-7845
Doug Adair	WH Cabinet Affairs	202/456-2800
Lynn Lawson	WH Political Affairs	202 456 6510
LARRY LANDRUM	WH COMM AGENCY	(202) 395-4040
WAYNE JUSTICE	COAST GUARD MILITARY AIDE/MILITARY OFFICE	202 395 1747
Kenneth Lange	U.S. Dept. HUD	(314) ⁵³⁹ 879 -6560
David A. Northcutt	U.S. Secret Service	(314) 539-2238
Philip G. Ley	U.S. Secret Service	314/539-2238
Bruce J. Bowen	U.S. SECRET SERVICE/PRES. PROT DIVISION	202/395-4011 (O) 202-619-8127 R 703 370-2763
RICK AHEARN	HUD - WASHINGTON	R 703 370-2763
WALTER JONES	COCHRAN TMC	(314) 621-8780
Stanley Williams	COCHRAN TMC	314-621-8783
DAVID CARARA	DAS HUD	202 703 619 8201
WILLIAM H BROWN	RA - HUD	913-236-2162

772-6388 - Walter Jones (home phone)