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Los Angeles Town Hall 5/29/92 [OA 6102]

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WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 5/28/92 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: ---

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: LOS ANGELES TOWN HALL
FRIDAY, MAY 29, 1992

SUBJECT: _____

	ACTION	FYI		ACTION	FYI
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	HORNER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SKINNER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCBRIDE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	MOORE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PETERSMEYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
BRADY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
BROMLEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ROLLINS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CALIO	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SMITH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	YEUTTER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	FINDLAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
GRAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	KAUFMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
HOLIDAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCGROARTY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS:

The attached has been forwarded to the President.

RESPONSE:

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

(Ferguson/Grossman)
May 28, 1992
TOWNHALL
Draft Four

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: LOS ANGELES TOWN HALL
12:10 P.M.
MAY 29, 1992

[Acknowledgments]

This morning I once again visited the riot-torn areas of this city. We have a long way to go. But I was struck by the progress already made in bringing a great city back. This remarkable effort has brought together federal, state and local officials, and most importantly, thousands of volunteers and private organizations. Yes, Los Angeles will come back -- and with all due respect, I hope that the news media will tell this heartening story loud and clear -- and give it as much attention as the looters and rioters received a few weeks ago.

As you know, at the outset of the riots I pledged to do whatever was necessary to restore order. I ordered the federalization of the National Guard and dispatched several thousand federal law enforcement officials to L.A.; we also had several thousand troops stand by for any contingency. I have been pleased to hear that our swift response did a great deal to stabilize a tragic and volatile situation.

We were also able to get disaster relief to Los Angeles in record time: Seven relief centers opened in the first week after the rioting, three more a few days later; housing assistance checks were being mailed to applicants within three days; and the Small Business Administration was able to approve loans in three weeks -- a process that normally takes three months. Our

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response was massive and quick -- to all the people who made it work, my thanks for a job well done.

I'm proud of what the federal government has done, but there should be no misunderstanding: federal assistance offers no reward for rioting. This help has been directed to the victims, not the perpetrators, of violence. To the criminals who subjected this city to three days of terror and hate, the message must be clear and unequivocal: lawlessness cannot be explained away. It will not be excused. And it will be punished.

In the starkest possible terms, this tragedy made clear the great unfinished business we face as a nation. I would like to speak to you now of what we must do to bring hope and opportunity to urban America. Today I make this pledge: we will rebuild our cities. We must learn the lessons of what happened here -- and then we must strike a new course, different from the old one, doing away with the failed blueprints of the past.

What are the lessons? Some people tell us that the hopelessness in urban America is a simple matter of economics, of jobs. Others say no, the answer lies in tougher rigorous law enforcement -- in safer streets.

This is a false choice. Of course the best anti-poverty program is a job. A job provides more than money -- it teaches dignity and self-reliance, the first rungs on the economic ladder. But jobs don't get created in the wake of a crime wave. The first lesson of L.A., then, is a simple one. To ensure domestic tranquility, to protect lives and property, this is the

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first duty of government, the prerequisite to promoting the general welfare. There can be no opportunity, no hope, in a community where decent citizens are held hostage to the whims of thugs.

Some people say that talking about crime and safe neighborhoods is playing politics. They're wrong. Playgrounds overrun by gangs, senior citizens locked behind triple-bolted doors, mothers shot through open kitchen windows -- this is not the America we want. Making neighborhoods safe isn't politics; it's simple decency. It's the right thing to do. Period.

Other people say our urban problems are only about money -- taxpayer money -- your money. They tell us the solution lies in ever higher government spending. This is another false choice -- more federal money versus less -- as if the problems of our inner cities are simply the result of a lack of federal funds. They are not. Over the last 25 years, we have spent the staggering sum of \$3.2 trillion on our social welfare system -- now well over \$200 billion a year. And the fact is, in hopes of eliminating poverty, we spent more money in the eighties than we did in the seventies, more in the seventies than in the sixties. For all the good intentions, decay and despair has only seeped deeper into our inner cities. But the tragedy isn't about wasted money -- it's about wasted lives.

That fact points to the second lesson of Los Angeles: For those left behind, the system itself is broken. We won't fix it with a simple increase in federal funds. You don't pump more gas

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into a car that doesn't run. You lift the hood, roll up your sleeves, and get to work. We need to overhaul the engine.

To start with, we must stand back for a moment and ask ourselves the basic question -- How has the system failed? What went wrong?

The American dream is based on the belief if you get a good education, find a job, work hard, raise a family, you will prosper. Our free economy, in which the important decisions are made by the people themselves, makes this possible.

But decent people in the inner cities, particularly low-income people, labor under an entirely different set of rules -- some laid down by the lawless, others laid down by government. As the bureaucratic power of government has grown in the inner cities, the power of the residents there to shape their own lives has steadily declined. All around the world we have seen the collapse of governmental systems that try to control the lives of their citizens. From Moscow to Managua the result is the same: When government bureaucracies make decisions that are best left to free men and women, poverty and despair inevitably follow. The terrible irony is this: while these systems die in every corner of the globe, one endures right here -- in our inner cities.

The system operates according to an unspoken premise -- that Americans who live in depressed neighborhoods are incapable of making the decisions that other Americans make every day. It assumes they are unable to take advantage of the same

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opportunities Americans have always used to better their lives. Worst of all, it presumes they don't even want to.

That's wrong. That's not compassion -- it's condescension and paternalism. And there's no room for it in America.

Think how the system works for families in the inner city: They find their choices and opportunities restricted at every turn. If you live in public housing, the government forbids you from buying your apartment, turning it into a private home, and building equity. If you want to give your kids a shot at a decent education, the government tells you where you have to send them to school, even if crack-dealers have taken over the playground. If you save to send your kids to college, you're accused of welfare fraud. If you marry someone with a full time job, you're penalized with a loss of income.

If you're still more ambitious, and strive to open a business, to create jobs in your neighborhood, you face an informal redline. The costs of government regulation and capital are already too high for our entrepreneurs; in the inner city, you must add to these the extra expenses of job training and security, plus the reluctance of investors to bring capital into your neighborhood.

No wonder the system doesn't work; no wonder it breeds irresponsibility and despair. It rejects a fundamental principle of a free society: people will not act responsibly if they're never given responsibility.

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So the third lesson is the simplest of all: if we have the courage to act, we can fix the system. But we have got to start now. We have the right principles, we have a straightforward plan. First, it makes government services, especially law enforcement, more responsive; and second, it returns decision-making power to individuals and communities and gives them a stake in their own future. Why will it succeed? Because it takes what works for the rest of America and brings it to our inner cities. And that's long overdue.

That is what we must do now. In the wake of the riots, I met with congressional leaders of both parties at the White House, and I presented them with a six-point plan of action -- a plan for a New America. We talked. We found common ground. We agreed that action was urgent. That was three weeks ago. Since then, nothing has happened on Capitol Hill. I still hope that Congress can put partisanship aside in this difficult election year. That means doing something important now for people who urgently need help. It means making this nation a nation of opportunity for all its people.

Let me briefly outline our plan.

First, we must attack crime with everything we've got. I urge Congress, once again, to pass my comprehensive crime bill. The bill goes back to the fundamentals: If you commit a crime, you will be caught -- if you're caught, you will be convicted -- if you're convicted, by God, you will go to jail.

To redouble our war on crime, we have also launched an initiative I call Weed and Seed. With increased federal resources, we can weed out the criminals from our inner cities, and then seed those areas with a concentration of social services, so that crime can no longer take root.

Second, we need to streamline the jumble of federal job training programs. Our Job Training 2000 initiative will offer "one-stop shopping" for those who want training but can't get it now. For example, in my conversation with Governor Wilson earlier today, I let him know of a new \$12 million Labor Department effort targetted to rebuild L.A.'s employment base.

Third, as Jack Kemp has said so often, we must turn the redline into the greenline around our cities -- to cut the costs of opening an inner-city business and creating jobs. That's what enterprise zones are all about. As you know, I've asked Congress to cut the capital gains tax on all Americans. In America's inner cities, where the need is most urgent, we should cut it to zero -- eliminate it entirely. That's how you bring real jobs to the inner city.

<<And here's an open invitation to the mayors of America's cities and a challenge to the Congress: If you meet the criteria, instead of fifty enterprise zones for America, every deserving neighborhood will become one.>>

Fourth, we must extend the principle of private property in the inner city. That means homeownership. Our HOPE initiative will for the first time allow residents the chance to turn public

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housing into private homes. The principle is simple: ownership gives people a stake in their neighborhoods; it instills pride and a sense of responsibility for what happens there.

Fifth, welfare reform to strip away the penalties for people who want to work, save, and start a family. Any genuine reform must meet three tests: It must encourage individual responsibility; it must promote economic independence through work; and it must promote and sustain stable family life. Our welfare system is a travesty and it's got to change.

Sixth, education reform. Every American child deserves a shot at a world-class education. And that means developing break-the-mold schools free of drugs and violence; it means community support for high standards and educational excellence. And it means that whether a family lives in the inner city or the suburbs -- parents should be able to choose their children's schools. <<Referendum issue comment>>

Each of the steps I've outlined here will work to restore a sense of self-sufficiency, of personal dignity, to inner city residents. But let's be honest: the problems we face can't be solved simply by adjusting economic inputs and outputs. Human beings respond to more than tax codes and bureaucratic rules. We are motivated first and foremost by values, by a sense of what is right and what is wrong.

If we are to take values seriously, and we must, we should summon the courage to be frank about them. The word "values" is not relative; values deal in absolutes. They separate right from

wrong, virtue from vice. If we are to speak of values, then, we must be prepared to praise certain kinds of behavior and, just as important, condemn others.

When a man and a woman -- or worse, a boy and a girl -- conceive a child that they are unprepared to care for, that is wrong, and society should not be afraid to say so. When a person succumbs to drug abuse or alcoholism, knowing full well the suffering he causes friends and loved ones, that is wrong. When a man abandons his family, that is wrong. When a person chooses the narcotic of welfare over the opportunity of work, that is wrong, and the responsibility is his own.

The federal government cannot teach values. But it can create an environment where decent values take root and grow. In every neighborhood in America, there are well-springs of traditional values. When I was last in Los Angeles, I had the privilege of meeting with the kids at the Challengers Boys and Girls Club. The club was founded by a remarkable man, Lou Dantzler. Lou works day and night to instill in these kids a sense of right and wrong, the habits they will need to succeed. In the gym where I spoke, huge, hand-printed signs covered the walls. And the signs said: "Preparation is the key to success." "Always have a positive attitude." "Education plus hard work plus discipline equals achievement."

In this sophisticated age, I suppose some people might find these old home-truths corny. I don't, and I'm sure Lou

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Dantzler's kids don't either. They've learned something that Americans across the generations have learned: traditional values bring hope in place of despair; they hold the power to change a neighborhood, to change a city, to change lives.

This is a time of great change for America. Change breeds uncertainty, and skepticism. I understand that. But I understand this, too: The skeptics won't do the work that needs to be done. People like Lou Dantzler will. He -- and the millions of Americans like him -- are what make America a rising nation, a country buoyed by the hopes and determination of people who refuse to settle for the way things are. Their faith is the best antidote to pessimism, the surest proof that the best days of America, the greatest and freest nation on earth, still lie before us.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

May 28, 1992

COPY AS FAXED -
FOR FILE.

MEMORANDUM FOR DAVID DEMAREST
ANDY FERGUSON

FROM: DAN MC GROARTY

SUBJECT: TOWN HALL

p. 1 para. 3 on POTUS' swift actions -- Is this too direct in claim-grabbing? Would it be better to recast, and let POTUS, in effect, think back to the decisions he made on the day and evening of May 1? This could make the same point....

p. 4 para. 3 -- Add CAPS: "The American dream is built on principles that -- RIGHT NOW -- simply do not apply in OUR inner cities." (Otherwise, this could be misconstrued.)

p. 5 para 3 -- Be careful here to establish the sympathetic note necessary to make the criticism -- condemn the system, not the people trapped by it. May want to ADD as preface: "IMAGINE WHAT YOUR LIFE WOULD BE LIKE ON WELFARE...."

p. 8 para 2 last sentence -- "When a person chooses welfare... that is wrong, etc." Agreed; but fact is, must don't choose welfare. This sentence will sting. I'd rewrite to say: "When a person chooses TO MAKE WELFARE NOT A WAY-STATION BUT A LIFE-STYLE...." Or some such.

Re Welfare principles:

"Policies:

That make a connection between welfare and work.

That encourage personal responsibility.

In place of the old programs that perpetuate dependence -- policies that promote independence."

There are many, many great passages in this draft. Good luck in keeping them there. Hope you're having a great ride out.

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LOS ANGELES TOWN HALL
MAY 29, 1992
12:10 P.M.

THANK YOU, LOD COOK. GREETINGS TO MAYOR BRADLEY,
GOVERNOR WILSON, AND TWO OF YOUR FORMER GOVERNORS --
GEORGE DEUKMEJIAN AND PAT BROWN. SECRETARY KEMP, AND
ADRIENNE MEDAWAR, PRESIDENT OF TOWN HALL OF CALIFORNIA.

PAT.
JAVELI

THIS MORNING I ONCE AGAIN VISITED THE RIOT-TORN
~~AREAS OF THIS CITY.~~ WE HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO. BUT I
WAS STRUCK BY THE PROGRESS ALREADY MADE IN BRINGING A
GREAT CITY BACK. THIS REMARKABLE EFFORT HAS BROUGHT
TOGETHER FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL OFFICIALS, AND MOST
IMPORTANTLY, THOUSANDS OF VOLUNTEERS, CHURCHES AND
NEIGHBORHOOD GROUPS. I THINK WE'VE SEEN ENOUGH OF THE
~~HORRIBLE IMAGES -- OVER AND OVER -- HOW ABOUT SOME OF~~
THE WONDERFUL THINGS GOING ON? YES, LOS ANGELES WILL
COME BACK. AND WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, I HOPE THAT THE
NEWS MEDIA WILL TELL THIS HEARTENING STORY LOUD AND
CLEAR -- AND GIVE IT AS MUCH ATTENTION AS THE LOOTERS
AND RIOTERS RECEIVED A FEW WEEKS AGO.

WAS OVER IN S. CALIF., TALKING

WISDOM
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BACK
TOGETHER

X

AS YOU KNOW, AT THE OUTSET OF THE RIOTS I PLEDGED TO DO WHATEVER WAS NECESSARY TO RESTORE ORDER. I ORDERED THE FEDERALIZATION OF THE NATIONAL GUARD AND DISPATCHED SEVERAL THOUSAND FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS TO L.A.; WE ALSO HAD SEVERAL THOUSAND TROOPS STAND BY FOR ANY CONTINGENCY. I HAVE BEEN PLEASED TO HEAR THAT OUR SWIFT RESPONSE DID A GREAT DEAL TO STABILIZE AN EXPLOSIVE SITUATION.

WE WERE ALSO ABLE TO GET DISASTER RELIEF TO LOS ANGELES IN RECORD TIME: SEVEN RELIEF CENTERS OPENED IN THE FIRST WEEK AFTER THE RIOTING, THREE MORE A FEW DAYS LATER; HOUSING ASSISTANCE CHECKS WERE BEING MAILED TO APPLICANTS WITHIN THREE DAYS; AND THE SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION WAS ABLE TO APPROVE LOANS IN WEEKS INSTEAD OF MONTHS. OUR RESPONSE WAS MASSIVE AND QUICK -- TO MY TEAM LED BY DAVID KEARNS AND AL DELLABOVI, AND TO ALL THE PEOPLE WHO MADE IT WORK, MY THANKS FOR A JOB WELL DONE.

I'M PROUD OF WHAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WAS ABLE TO DO, BUT THERE SHOULD BE NO MISUNDERSTANDING: FEDERAL ASSISTANCE OFFERS NO REWARD FOR RIOTING. THIS HELP HAS BEEN DIRECTED TO THE VICTIMS, NOT THE PERPETRATORS, OF VIOLENCE. TO THE CRIMINALS WHO SUBJECTED THIS CITY TO THREE DAYS OF TERROR AND HATE, THE MESSAGE MUST BE UNEQUIVOCAL: LAWLESSNESS CANNOT BE EXPLAINED AWAY. IT WILL NOT BE EXCUSED. AND IT WILL BE PUNISHED.

IN THE STARKEST POSSIBLE TERMS, THIS TRAGEDY MADE CLEAR THE GREAT UNFINISHED BUSINESS WE FACE AS A NATION. WE MUST STRIKE A NEW COURSE. WE WILL REBUILD OUR CITIES -- AND WE CAN -- BUT ONLY IF WE LEARN THE LESSONS OF WHAT HAPPENED HERE. WHAT ARE THE LESSONS? SOME PEOPLE TELL US THAT THE HOPELESSNESS IN URBAN AMERICA IS A SIMPLE MATTER OF ECONOMICS, OF JOBS. OTHERS SAY NO, THE ANSWER LIES IN TOUGHER LAW ENFORCEMENT -- IN SAFER STREETS.

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THIS IS A FALSE CHOICE. OF COURSE THE BEST ANTI-POVERTY PROGRAM IS A JOB. A JOB PROVIDES MORE THAN MONEY -- IT TEACHES DIGNITY AND SELF-RELIANCE, THE FIRST RUNGS ON THE ECONOMIC LADDER. MORE THAN THAT IT GIVES THEM HOPE. BUT JOBS DON'T GET CREATED IN THE WAKE OF A CRIME WAVE. THE FIRST LESSON OF L.A., THEN, IS A SIMPLE ONE. THE PRIMARY DUTY OF GOVERNMENT IS TO PROTECT THE SAFETY OF LIVES AND PROPERTY. THERE CAN BE NO OPPORTUNITY, NO HOPE, IN A COMMUNITY WHERE DECENT CITIZENS ARE HELD HOSTAGE TO GANGS OF CRIMINALS.

I KNOW THIS IS A CAMPAIGN YEAR. AND EVERY TIME SOMEONE MENTIONS CRIME OR LAW AND ORDER THE ACCUSATIONS FLY ABOUT "PLAYING THE RACE CARD." LET ME JUST SAY, STOP RIGHT THERE. THERE IS NOTHING RACIST OR DIVISIVE ~~X~~ ABOUT PROTECTING DECENT PEOPLE FROM CRIME. SOME PEOPLE SAY IT'S PLAYING POLITICS. WELL THEY'RE JUST PLAIN WRONG. PLAYGROUNDS OVERRUN BY GANGS, SENIOR CITIZENS LOCKED BEHIND TRIPLE-BOLTED DOORS, MOTHERS SHOT THROUGH OPEN KITCHEN WINDOWS -- THIS IS NOT THE AMERICA WE WANT. MAKING NEIGHBORHOODS SAFE ISN'T POLITICS; IT'S SIMPLE DECENCY. IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO. PERIOD.

OTHER PEOPLE SAY OUR URBAN PROBLEMS ARE ONLY ABOUT MONEY -- TAXPAYER MONEY -- YOUR MONEY. THEY TELL US THE SOLUTION LIES IN EVER HIGHER GOVERNMENT SPENDING. THIS IS ANOTHER FALSE CHOICE -- MORE FEDERAL MONEY VERSUS LESS -- AS IF THE PROBLEMS OF OUR INNER CITIES ARE SIMPLY THE RESULT OF A LACK OF FEDERAL FUNDS. THEY ARE NOT. LET'S BE CLEAR ABOUT THIS: OVER THE LAST 25 YEARS, WE HAVE SPENT THE STAGGERING SUM OF \$3.2 TRILLION ON OUR SOCIAL WELFARE SYSTEM. AND THE FACT IS, IN HOPES OF ELIMINATING POVERTY, WE SPENT MORE MONEY IN THE EIGHTIES THAN WE DID IN THE SEVENTIES, MORE IN THE SEVENTIES THAN IN THE SIXTIES. FOR ALL THE GOOD INTENTIONS, DECAY AND DESPAIR HAVE ONLY SEEPED DEEPER AND DEEPER INTO OUR INNER CITIES. BUT THE TRAGEDY ISN'T ABOUT WASTED MONEY -- IT'S ABOUT WASTED LIVES.

THAT FACT POINTS TO THE SECOND LESSON OF LOS ANGELES: FOR THOSE LEFT BEHIND, THE SYSTEM ITSELF IS BROKEN. WE WON'T FIX IT WITH A SIMPLE INCREASE IN FEDERAL FUNDS. YOU DON'T PUMP MORE GAS INTO A CAR THAT DOESN'T RUN. YOU LIFT THE HOOD, ROLL UP YOUR SLEEVES, AND GET TO WORK. WE NEED TO OVERHAUL THE ENGINE.

SO WE START WITH THE MOST THE BASIC QUESTION -- HOW HAS THE SYSTEM FAILED? WHAT WENT WRONG? THE AMERICAN DREAM IS BASED ON THE BELIEF THAT IF YOU GET A GOOD EDUCATION, FIND A JOB, WORK HARD, RAISE A FAMILY, SAVE FOR THE FUTURE -- YOU WILL PROSPER. OUR FREE ECONOMY, IN WHICH THE IMPORTANT DECISIONS ARE MADE BY THE PEOPLE THEMSELVES, MAKES THIS POSSIBLE.

BUT DECENT PEOPLE IN THE INNER CITIES, PARTICULARLY THOSE WITH LOW INCOMES, LABOR UNDER AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT SET OF RULES -- SOME LAID DOWN BY THE LAWLESS, OTHERS LAID DOWN BY GOVERNMENT. AS THE BUREAUCRATIC POWER OF GOVERNMENT HAS GROWN IN THE INNER CITIES, THE POWER OF THE RESIDENTS THERE TO SHAPE THEIR OWN LIVES -- TO MAKE THE IMPORTANT DECISIONS -- HAS STEADILY DECLINED.

THE SYSTEM OPERATES ON AN UNSPOKEN PREMISE -- THAT AMERICANS WHO LIVE IN DEPRESSED NEIGHBORHOODS ARE INCAPABLE OF MAKING THE DECISIONS THAT OTHER AMERICANS MAKE EVERY DAY. IT ASSUMES THEY ARE UNABLE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE SAME OPPORTUNITIES AMERICANS HAVE ALWAYS USED TO BETTER THEIR LIVES. WORST OF ALL, IT PRESUMES THEY DON'T EVEN WANT TO.

THAT'S WRONG. THAT'S NOT COMPASSION -- IT'S CONDESCENSION AND PATERNALISM. AND THERE'S NO ROOM FOR IT IN AMERICA.

THINK HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS FOR FAMILIES IN THE INNER CITY: THEY FIND THEIR CHOICES AND OPPORTUNITIES RESTRICTED AT EVERY TURN. IF YOU LIVE IN PUBLIC HOUSING, THE GOVERNMENT FORBIDS YOU FROM OWNING YOUR APARTMENT, MAKING IT A PRIVATE HOME, AND BUILDING EQUITY. IF YOU WANT TO GIVE YOUR KIDS A DECENT EDUCATION, THE GOVERNMENT TELLS YOU WHERE TO SEND THEM TO SCHOOL, EVEN IF CRACK-DEALERS HAVE TAKEN OVER THE PLAYGROUND. IF YOU SAVE TO SEND YOUR KIDS TO COLLEGE, YOU'RE ACCUSED OF WELFARE FRAUD. IF YOU MARRY SOMEONE WITH A FULL-TIME JOB, YOU'RE PENALIZED WITH A LOSS OF INCOME.

*Audience
panic.*

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IF YOU'RE STILL MORE AMBITIOUS, AND TRY TO OPEN A BUSINESS, TO CREATE JOBS IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD, YOU FACE AN INFORMAL REDLINE. GOVERNMENT REGULATION AND CAPITAL ARE ALREADY TOO EXPENSIVE FOR OUR ENTREPRENEURS; IN THE INNER CITY, ADD THE EXTRA EXPENSES OF JOB TRAINING AND SECURITY, PLUS THE RELUCTANCE OF INVESTORS TO BRING CAPITAL AND CREDIT INTO YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD.

NO WONDER THE SYSTEM DOESN'T WORK; NO WONDER IT BREEDS IRRESPONSIBILITY AND DESPAIR. IT REJECTS A FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE OF A FREE SOCIETY: PEOPLE WILL ~~X~~ ACT RESPONSIBLY IF THEY'RE GIVEN RESPONSIBILITY. THE CONVERSE IS ALSO TRUE: PEOPLE WON'T ACT RESPONSIBLY IF THEY'RE DENIED RESPONSIBILITY. IS IT ANY WONDER THAT PEOPLE WITH NO CHANCE TO OWN PROPERTY DON'T RESPECT THE PROPERTY OF OTHERS?

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SO THE THIRD LESSON IS THE SIMPLEST OF ALL: IF WE HAVE THE COURAGE TO ACT, WE CAN FIX THIS SYSTEM. BUT WE HAVE GOT TO START NOW. WE HAVE THE RIGHT PRINCIPLES, AND WE HAVE DEVELOPED A STRAIGHTFORWARD PLAN -- A PLAN FOR A NEW AMERICA. FIRST, IT MAKES GOVERNMENT SERVICES, ESPECIALLY LAW ENFORCEMENT, MORE RESPONSIVE; AND SECOND, IT RETURNS DECISION-MAKING POWER TO INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES, AND GIVES THEM A STAKE IN THEIR OWN FUTURE. WHY WILL IT WORK? BECAUSE IT TAKES WHAT WORKS FOR THE REST OF AMERICA AND BRINGS IT TO OUR INNER CITIES. AND THAT'S LONG OVERDUE.

IN THE WAKE OF THE RIOTS, I MET WITH CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS OF BOTH PARTIES AT THE WHITE HOUSE, AND I PRESENTED THEM WITH THE NEW AMERICA PLAN. WE TALKED. WE FOUND COMMON GROUND. WE AGREED THAT THE NEED FOR ACTION WAS URGENT. THAT WAS THREE WEEKS AGO. SINCE THEN, NOTHING HAS HAPPENED ON CAPITOL HILL. I STILL HOPE THAT CONGRESS CAN PUT PARTISANSHIP ASIDE IN THIS DIFFICULT ELECTION YEAR AND PASS THIS PLAN NOW -- AND NOT SOMETHING THEY KNOW I CANNOT SIGN. THAT MEANS DOING SOMETHING IMPORTANT -- NOW -- FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED HELP -- NOW. AND IT MEANS MAKING THIS NATION A NATION OF OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL OUR PEOPLE.

LET ME BRIEFLY OUTLINE OUR PLAN. FIRST, WE MUST ATTACK CRIME WITH EVERYTHING WE'VE GOT. I URGE CONGRESS, ONCE AGAIN, TO PASS MY COMPREHENSIVE CRIME BILL. THE BILL GOES BACK TO THE FUNDAMENTALS: IF YOU COMMIT A CRIME, YOU WILL BE CAUGHT -- IF YOU'RE CAUGHT, YOU WILL BE CONVICTED -- IF YOU'RE CONVICTED, YOU WILL GO TO JAIL.

TO REDOUBLE OUR WAR ON CRIME, WE HAVE LAUNCHED AN INITIATIVE I CALL WEED AND SEED. WITH INCREASED FEDERAL RESOURCES, WE CAN WEED OUT THE CRIMINALS FROM OUR INNER CITIES, AND THEN SEED THOSE AREAS WITH A CONCENTRATION OF SOCIAL SERVICES, SO THAT CRIME CAN NO LONGER TAKE ROOT.

SECOND, WE NEED TO STREAMLINE THE JUMBLE OF FEDERAL JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS. OUR JOB TRAINING 2000 INITIATIVE WILL OFFER "ONE-STOP SHOPPING" FOR THOSE WHO WANT TRAINING BUT CAN'T GET IT NOW. FOR EXAMPLE, TALKING WITH GOVERNOR WILSON EARLIER TODAY, I LET HIM KNOW OF A NEW \$12 MILLION LABOR DEPARTMENT EFFORT TARGETED TO REBUILD L.A.'S EMPLOYMENT BASE.

THIRD, AS JACK KEMP HAS SAID SO OFTEN, WE MUST TURN THE REDLINE AROUND OUR CITIES INTO A GREENLINE -- TO CUT THE COSTS OF OPENING AN INNER-CITY BUSINESS AND CREATING JOBS. THAT'S WHAT ENTERPRISE ZONES ARE ALL ABOUT. I KNOW MAYOR BRADLEY AGREES WITH ME -- AND I THANK HIM FOR HIS STRONG SUPPORT. AND AS YOU KNOW, I'VE ASKED CONGRESS TO CUT THE CAPITAL GAINS TAX ON ALL AMERICANS. IN AMERICA'S INNER CITIES, WHERE THE NEED IS MOST URGENT, WE SHOULD CUT IT TO ZERO -- ELIMINATE IT ENTIRELY. THAT'S HOW YOU BRING REAL JOBS TO THE INNER CITY.

AND HERE'S AN OPEN INVITATION TO THE MAYORS OF AMERICA'S CITIES -- AND A CHALLENGE TO THE CONGRESS: I WANT EVERY AMERICAN CITY WITH A DESERVING NEIGHBORHOOD -- NEIGHBORHOODS WITH HIGH CRIME AND HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT -- TO BECOME AN ENTERPRISE ZONE. TAKE YOUR CASE TO CONGRESS, AND I'LL SUPPORT YOU ALL THE WAY.

6/21/77

THE FOURTH STEP IS TO EXTEND THE PRINCIPLE OF PRIVATE PROPERTY INTO THE INNER CITY. THAT MEANS HOMEOWNERSHIP. OUR HOPE INITIATIVE WILL OFFER RESIDENTS THE CHANCE TO TURN PUBLIC HOUSING INTO PRIVATE HOMES. OWNERSHIP GIVES PEOPLE A STAKE IN THEIR NEIGHBORHOODS; IT INSTILLS PRIDE AND A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR WHAT HAPPENS NEXT DOOR AND DOWN THE BLOCK.

FIFTH, WELFARE REFORM -- TO STRIP AWAY THE PENALTIES FOR PEOPLE WHO WANT TO WORK, SAVE, AND START A FAMILY. ANY GENUINE REFORM MUST MEET THREE TESTS: IT MUST ENCOURAGE INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY; IT MUST TIE WELFARE TO WORK; AND IT MUST PROMOTE AND SUSTAIN STABLE FAMILY LIFE. OUR WELFARE SYSTEM IS A TRAVESTY AND I AM DETERMINED TO CHANGE IT.

AND SIXTH, EDUCATION REFORM. EVERY AMERICAN CHILD DESERVES A SHOT AT A WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION. AND THAT MEANS DEVELOPING INNOVATIVE SCHOOLS FREE OF DRUGS AND VIOLENCE; IT MEANS COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR HIGH STANDARDS AND EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE. AND IT MEANS THAT WHETHER A FAMILY LIVES IN THE INNER CITY OR THE SUBURBS -- PARENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO CHOOSE THEIR CHILDREN'S SCHOOLS.

EACH OF THE STEPS I'VE OUTLINED HERE WILL WORK TO RESTORE A SENSE OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY, OF PERSONAL DIGNITY, TO INNER CITY RESIDENTS. TODAY I'VE TALKED ABOUT THE NEED TO OVERHAUL OUR OBSOLETE BUREAUCRATIC SYSTEM, ABOUT THE FACT THAT THE SYSTEM ROBS THE POOR AS WELL AS THE TAXPAYER, ABOUT THE NEED FOR JUSTICE AND ORDER ON OUR STREETS. BUT I ALSO BELIEVE THERE ARE DEEPER ISSUES AT WORK HERE -- ONES THAT TRANSCEND THE PRESENT MOMENT.

LET'S BE HONEST: THE PROBLEMS WE FACE CAN'T BE SOLVED SIMPLY BY ADJUSTING ECONOMIC INPUTS AND OUTPUTS. HUMAN BEINGS RESPOND TO MORE THAN TAX CODES AND BUREAUCRATIC RULES. WE ARE MOTIVATED FIRST AND FOREMOST BY VALUES, BY A SENSE OF WHAT IS RIGHT AND WHAT IS WRONG.

IF WE ARE TO TAKE VALUES SERIOUSLY, AND WE MUST, WE SHOULD SUMMON THE COURAGE TO BE FRANK ABOUT THEM. THE WORD "VALUES" IS NOT RELATIVE; VALUES DEAL IN ABSOLUTES. THEY SEPARATE RIGHT FROM WRONG, VIRTUE FROM VICE.

LAWS AND BUDGETS ARE NOT ENOUGH. WE NEED A MORAL, AND YES, A SPIRITUAL REVIVAL IN OUR NATION, SO THAT FAMILIES UNITE: FATHERS LOVE MOTHERS, AND STAY TOGETHER, IN SPITE OF PAIN AND HARD TIMES, BECAUSE THEY LOVE THEIR CHILDREN AND LOOK FORWARD TO ANOTHER GENERATION GROWING UP TALL AND CONFIDENT IN THE WARMTH OF GOD'S LOVE.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CANNOT TEACH VALUES. BUT IT CAN CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE THEY TAKE ROOT AND GROW. IN EVERY NEIGHBORHOOD IN AMERICA, THERE ARE WELL-SPRINGS OF TRADITIONAL VALUES. WHEN I WAS LAST IN LOS ANGELES, I HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF MEETING WITH THE KIDS AT THE CHALLENGERS BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB. THE CLUB WAS FOUNDED BY A REMARKABLE MAN, LOU DANTZLER. LOU WORKS DAY AND NIGHT TO GIVE THESE KIDS THE VALUES AND HABITS THEY WILL NEED TO SUCCEED. IN THE GYM WHERE I SPOKE, HUGE, HAND-PRINTED SIGNS COVERED THE WALLS. AND THE SIGNS SAID: "PREPARATION IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS." "ALWAYS HAVE A POSITIVE ATTITUDE." "EDUCATION PLUS HARD WORK PLUS DISCIPLINE EQUALS ACHIEVEMENT."

IN THIS SOPHISTICATED AGE, I SUPPOSE SOME PEOPLE MIGHT FIND THESE OLD HOME-TRUTHS CORNY. I DON'T, AND I'M SURE LOU DANTZLER'S KIDS DON'T EITHER. THEY'VE LEARNED SOMETHING THAT AMERICANS ACROSS THE GENERATIONS HAVE LEARNED: TRADITIONAL VALUES BRING HOPE IN PLACE OF DESPAIR; THEY HOLD THE POWER TO TRANSFORM A NEIGHBORHOOD, AND A CITY, AND A LIFE.

THIS IS A TIME OF GREAT CHANGE FOR AMERICA. CHANGE SOMETIMES SEEMS TO THREATEN THE MOST VALUABLE LEGACIES WE HOPE TO LEAVE OUR CHILDREN: GOOD JOBS, STRONG FAMILIES, A NATION AT PEACE. CHANGE BREEDS UNCERTAINTY, AND SKEPTICISM. I UNDERSTAND THAT. BUT I UNDERSTAND THIS, TOO: THE SKEPTICS WON'T DO THE WORK THAT NEEDS TO BE DONE. PEOPLE LIKE LOU DANTZLER WILL. HE -- AND EVERY AMERICAN LIKE HIM -- ARE WHAT MAKE AMERICA A RISING NATION, A COUNTRY BUOYED BY THE HOPES AND DETERMINATION OF PEOPLE WHO REFUSE TO SETTLE FOR THE STATUS QUO. THEIR FAITH IS THE BEST ANTIDOTE TO PESSIMISM, THE SUREST PROOF THAT THE BEST DAYS OF AMERICA -- THE GREATEST, FREEST NATION ON EARTH -- STILL LIE BEFORE US.

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