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NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION
Presidential Libraries Transfer/Disposal Sheet

ITEM ID 00640

DESCRIPTION OF ITEM MOVED . . Two black and white White House
photographs of Black Civil Rights
Leaders meeting with President Ford.
One is unnumbered and the other is
A1616-17A (10/25/74).

COLLECTION/SERIES/FOLDER ID . 031500148

COLLECTION TITLE STANLEY S. SCOTT PAPERS (WH Public
Liaison Office - Minority Affairs)

BOX NUMBER 18

FOLDER TITLE Presidential Meeting with Black Civil
Rights Leaders, October 25, 1974

ACCESSION NUMBER 1998-NLF-022

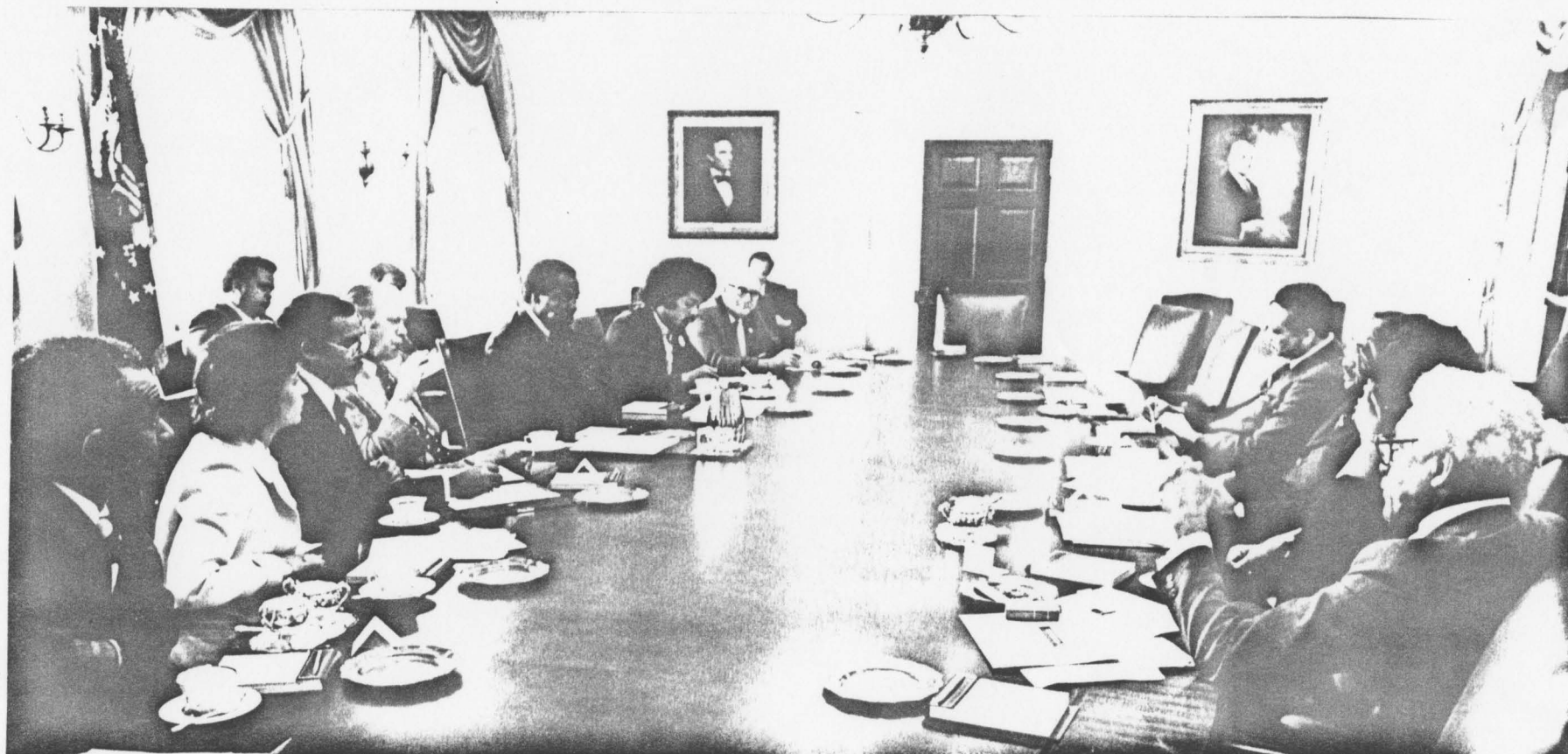
MOVEMENT DATE 06/15/2001

TYPE OF MATERIAL Photographs

NEW LOCATION Audiovisual Collection

ARCHIVIST William H. McNitt





October 23, 1974

MEETING WITH KEY BLACK CIVIL RIGHTS LEADERS

Friday, October 25, 1974

12:15 p.m. (30 Minutes)

The Cabinet Room

From: Stan Scott



I. PURPOSE

To let these leaders know that the President intends to build bridges to human dignity across that gulf which today too frequently separates black from white America. To solicit the recommendations and suggestions of these respected Americans as the President seeks solutions to domestic problems.

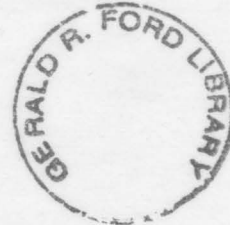
II. BACKGROUND, PARTICIPANTS AND PRESS PLAN

- A. Background: Immediately after assuming the Vice Presidency, Mr. President, you requested that I set up a meeting with top civil rights leaders to establish a spirit of cooperation and willingness to work with all segments of American society to help insure success of the Administration's civil rights and minority-oriented programs. Your first White House meeting, as Vice President, was with top black Administration appointees.

Today's meeting is the latest in a series that you have held with blacks (Black Caucus, Black Republicans and Black Appointees) to gain their views on pressing domestic problems. Each participant in today's meeting has been asked to leave with us a position paper and recommended solutions to problems facing blacks and the poor.

Roy Wilkins, elder statesman of the civil rights movement, is out of the country and could not be with us today. His organization is ably represented by Clarence Mitchell. Roy Wilkins will meet with you at a later date here at the White House. Mr. President, you met with several of these black leaders when you were Vice President.

- B. Participants: Robert Hartmann, John Marsh, Donald Rumsfeld, Stan Scott, Geoffrey Shepard, John Calhoun, William Walker
Roger Semerad
- C. Press Plan: Press Photo



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 19, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: HONORABLE DONALD RUMSFELD
FROM: STAN SCOTT
SUBJECT: Boston School Busing

In laying the groundwork for President Ford's scheduled meeting on Friday, October 25, with civil rights leaders, I would recommend an initiative prior to that session to highlight the President's ongoing concern that Judge Arthur Garrity's school busing order is upheld.

Since Boston school busing is certain to be an issue in the President's meeting with the civil rights leaders, I would recommend that I be sent to Boston early in the week as the President's personal emissary to meet with Boston black leaders in closed-door, off-the-record sessions, reporting back to the President prior to his meeting on Friday. The President could announce to the civil rights leaders on Friday that in addition to receiving daily reports on the Boston situation from the Attorney General, he has had his personal White House representative on the scene to view the problem and to report to the President his findings.

Several Boston black leaders I have worked with in the past have suggested such a visit by my office.

Agree _____

Disagree _____

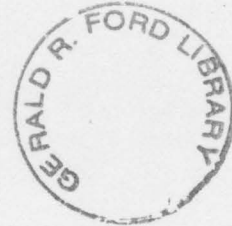
Comments _____



OCTOBER 25, 1974

MEMORANDUM

FROM: CLARENCE MITCHELL
DIRECTOR, WASHINGTON BUREAU, NAACP
422 FIRST STREET, S. E.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20003
TELEPHONE: 202 / 544-5694



SUBJECT: SELECTED ITEMS MERITING ACTION
BY PRESIDENT GERALD R. FORD AS
OF THE DATE OF THIS MEMORANDUM

Over the years the writer of this memorandum and Mr. Roy Wilkins, Executive Director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, have been present together at meetings of this kind with Presidents of the United States. Unfortunately, Mr. Wilkins is unable to be present at this meeting but it is understood that there will be a future meeting at which he will be present. At that time, Mr. Wilkins will discuss matters current at the time of his visit to the White House.

As of this date, October 25, 1974, the following are selected problems that require favorable action by President Ford:

1. On September 21 - 22, 1974, Mr. Vernon Jordan, Executive Director of the National Urban League, and Mr. Wilkins were two of six conveners of a "Black Economic Summit Meeting." We support recommendations of that meeting and urge favorable Presidential action on matters therein which require the Chief Executive's implementation.*

* A press release giving the highlights of the two day meeting is attached.

MEMORANDUM
FROM: CLARENCE MITCHELL
OCTOBER 25, 1974
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2. Sections of the 1965 Voting Rights Act banning literacy tests and requiring prior clearance of registration and voting laws in covered states and political subdivisions must be extended in 1975. We urge that President Ford give his full support to the extension of these sections of the law.

3. Brown v. Board of Education (II) 349 U. S. 294 (1955) lists school transportation systems among remedies available to courts in eliminating racial segregation in the public schools. A long line of cases affirm the principle of using transportation of students to accomplish desegregation. In recent years a code term "forced busing" has been and is widely used to attack and discredit lawful and proper court decisions. We urge that the President state and give his full support to all lawful means of accomplishing desegregation in the North as well as the South, including transportation of students. We also urge that the President and all officials of government cease using the term "forced busing" when referring to court orders that require such action. The Boston school problem makes this imperative.

4. The National Alliance of Postal and Federal Employees, was founded in 1913 to represent black postal workers, as the National Alliance of Postal Employees. The United States Postal Service now refuses to permit this union to represent its members in collective bargaining and the handling of grievances. We presented this matter to the White House when President Nixon was in office. The details have been handled by Messrs. Leonard Garment and Brad Patterson. We urged that the President direct that the Postal Service and appropriate members of his staff work with the interested parties to achieve a solution that will give the National Alliance of Postal and Federal Employees recognition and bargaining rights.

MEMORANDUM
FROM: CLARENCE MITCHELL
OCTOBER 25, 1974
PAGE 3



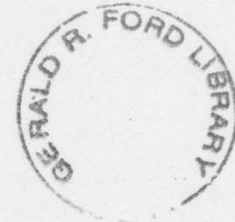
5. The problem of discrimination in the Federal Government continues to be acute. A flagrant example is the attempt of some elements in the State Department to oust Ms. Barbara Watson from her post of Administrator, Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs, and replace her with a white man. The Department made its first effort to oust her during President Nixon's Administration after she served as spokesperson for black employees seeking promotions and better opportunities. A second attempt was made after President Ford took office, apparently without his knowledge or consent -- even though this is an appointment that requires Senate confirmation.

As the highest ranking black employee in the State Department, Ms. Watson has frequently been mentioned as an example of the progress that is being made to end racial discrimination in the Federal government. It is urged that President Ford retain her on the basis of her high level performance as attested to in written expressions of President Nixon and Secretaries of State, including the present Secretary, Mr. Kissinger.

6. One of the ironies of our times is that a large number of blacks who did not resist the draft and who, in many instances volunteered for duty in the armed services, are now the victims of unfavorable discharges. The NAACP has found that the vast majority of the unfavorable discharges that have come to our attention were given unfairly and based on racial discrimination. We believe it is imperative that the President set up a system for prompt and fair review of unfavorable discharges in order to permit those who are the victims of this problem to get full and corrective redress. We will be ready to give technical advice on how this can be done.

MEMORANDUM
FROM: CLARENCE MITCHELL
OCTOBER 25, 1974
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7. The Office of Economic Opportunity was one of the most effective agencies of government in the war against poverty. We shall continue to work for the restoration of this program and we urge that the President give his full support to this effort.



SEPTEMBER 21-22, 1974

BLACK ECONOMIC SUMMIT MEETING

Statler Hilton Hotel
Washington, D.C.

CONVENERS

DOROTHY HEIGHT
President
National Council of Negro Women

MAYNARD JACKSON
President-Elect
National Black Caucus
of Local Elected Officials

VERNON E. JORDAN, JR.
Executive Director
National Urban League

CHARLES B. RANGEL
Chairman
Black Congressional Caucus

ROY WILKINS
Executive Director
NAACP



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

After two days of intense deliberation, the first Black Economic Summit has called on the President of the United States and the Congress to institute "bold and creative approaches.... to ease the burden of inflation on the American consumer--particularly on blacks, other minorities, and the poor."

This unprecedented meeting held at the Washington, D.C. Statler Hilton Hotel on September 20-22, attracted a cross-section of the nation's black experts and leaders representing a combined constituency of over six million citizens.

Leaders from academia business, the professions, civil rights organizations, religious organizations, community groups, and government convened under the joint sponsorship of Ms. Dorothy Height, president, National Council of Negro Women; Maynard Jackson, president-elect, National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials; Vernon E. Jordan, Jr., executive director, National Urban League; Charles B. Rangel, chairman, Black Congressional Caucus and Roy Wilkins, executive director, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.



In a soul-searching position paper released today and entitled, "The Economic Crisis and the Black Community: A Call for Action", the Black Economic Summit recommends a number of measures aimed at easing inflation's 'disproportionate' pressures on minorities.

The recommendations call for tax reform and reordered budget priorities, a public service employment program of at "least one million jobs", equity in the distribution and delivery of adequate housing and community development services for minorities and the substitution of cash for food stamps.

The paper discredits the notion of "tolerable levels of unemployment" and urges the implementation of a full employment policy to create jobs for all citizens "willing and able to work."

Cutbacks in the funding of programs which serve human needs cannot be tolerated, says the paper. Instead "immediate reductions" should be made in "wasteful, inefficient military expenditures". Funds generated from the reordered budget priorities should be channeled into the improved delivery of human needs services.

The paper recommends lower interest rates while calling for restrictions in loans for non-priority business and consumer credit. It also advises the institution of a monetary policy directed primarily at capital controls on multinational corporations with "dollar outflows to overseas markets."

It "strongly urges" the President to appoint blacks and other minorities to "key decisionmaking positions in all areas which affect national economic affairs, including the Council of Economic Advisors, the Office of Management and Budget, the Federal Reserve Board, and the Domestic Council."



In the final paragraphs of the document the meeting participants warn that "widespread misery and bitter competition for scarce jobs" can only increase social and racial tensions to an unbearable degree."

However, they conclude that "our recommendations draw a clear path out of the tangled jungle of economic problems and into the open fields of equitable and just prosperity."

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

September 23, 1974

Contact James D. Williams or Don Rojas
Communications Department
National Urban League
55 East 52nd Street
New York, New York
Tele 212/751-0300



A. Philip Randolph Institute

260 Park Avenue South
New York, N.Y. 10010
(212) 533-8000

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President

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James Jones, Sr.
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Kivie Kaplan
Maida Springer Kemp
Leon Keyserling
Roy Kirkley
Jim Lawson
John H. Lyons
Will Maslow
Benjamin E. Mays
Isaiah Minkoff
Clarence Mitchell
Rev. Gregory Mooney
John Morsell
Emanuel Muravchik
Eleanor H. Norton
S. Frank Raftery
Richard Ravitch
L. D. Reddick
John P. Roche
Albert Shanker
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Donald Slaiman
Louis Stulberg
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Gus Tyler
Hunter Wharton
C. Vann Woodward
Andrew Young

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Program Director

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Controller

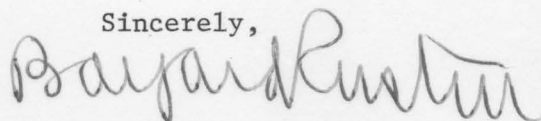
October 24, 1974

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Mr. President:

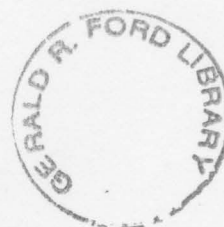
Enclosed is the memorandum I prepared for the
White House meeting on civil rights. I hope you
will find it useful in helping to shape a civil
rights program for the nation.

Sincerely,



Bayard Rustin
Executive Director

BR/hh
encl:



STATEMENT OF BAYARD RUSTIN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, A. PHILIP RANDOLPH INSTITUTE
PREPARED AT THE REQUEST OF PRESIDENT GERALD R. FORD FOR HIS MEETING
WITH CIVIL RIGHTS LEADERS AT WHITE HOUSE ON
OCTOBER 25, 1974



Mr. President, I am deeply appreciative of the opportunity to speak here about the economic and social crises which black people face.

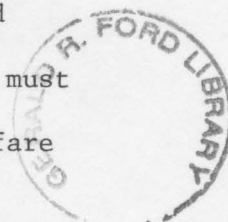
There is a sense of desperation in the black community. It stems, first, from the very real socio-economic problems of rising unemployment, deteriorating urban conditions, an inflation which casts its heaviest burden on poor and working people, and diminishing opportunities for upward mobility, and second from the pervasive feeling that the Administration has neither the concern nor the will to directly confront this crisis.

In addition to these problems, your Administration, like that of your predecessor, appears unwilling to accept the responsibility to uphold the law of the land on civil rights issues. I'm sure I'm not alone in deploring your recent statement which took issue with Judge Garrity's desegregation decision. Your words have encouraged resistance to the law, physical violence, bitterness and polarization which continue to divide Boston today.

If there is any of Mr. Nixon's legacies you would do well to break with, it is the legacy of racial exploitation for political gain. You have stated the intention to represent "all the people."

That means, above all, supporting laws enacted to protect the rights of minorities, even when those laws clash with your philosophical beliefs. Which is more important: your personal opposition to busing, or your obligation as President to both support the law and encourage, by your example, the rest of the nation to adhere to the law? This was the basic issue in Boston; and it is an issue you will no doubt face again as school desegregation proceeds.

Going beyond the Boston situation, you have an unparalleled opportunity to complete the job of school integration while at the same time minimizing polarization and strife. But this requires decisive action, not the voluntarism your administration seems to prefer. The laws of the land regarding equality and freedom must be fully enforced. The administrative agencies must act with vigor. The Department of Health, Education and Welfare must no longer refrain from utilizing the power to withhold federal aid from school districts which refuse to fully desegregate. To do so only postpones the inevitable day when the courts order the schools to desegregate. In the meantime, those forces who oppose integration are given a new legitimacy, and the agony of school desegregation is deepened and drawn-out. You would be doing black people and, indeed, the nation itself a notable service by putting the moral force of the presidency and the enforcement machinery of your administration unequivocally behind school integration, so that this problem can be resolved, once and for all.

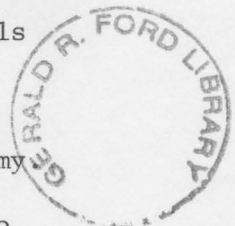


Concerning the economic plight of the black community, I have one general observation and a number of specific recommendations to make.

The time has passed when the most serious problems facing black people--the problems of finding decent jobs and gaining access to basic services--can be resolved by civil rights programs. That the average black family earns less than 60 per cent of the average white family is a national disgrace. But racial equality simply cannot be achieved through racially-based programs. A strategy that seeks justice for all poor and working people will, moreover, inevitably benefit blacks more than other social groups simply because black people are so heavily concentrated at the lowest levels of the economy.

As for specifics, I would urge that the following proposals be given the highest priority.

1. There must be a commitment to a full employment economy. Black people, other minorities, white workers--Americans can no longer tolerate the sacrifice of their jobs to an unsuccessful fight against inflation. If, as it now appears, unemployment in the private sector is to rise even beyond its already criminal levels, government must resolve to supply public jobs to the unemployed on a significantly larger scale than the half-hearted measure you recently proposed. I cannot overemphasize the importance to the black community of a job program; it is, quite simply, our most fundamental need.



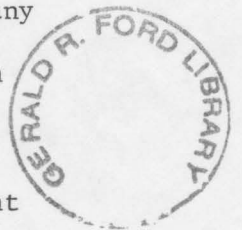
2. There must be a massive federal effort to deal with the deterioration of the cities. Local governments and the states simply cannot deal with the multitude of problems they face.

3. We need a comprehensive health insurance program that goes well beyond the measure endorsed by Mr. Nixon and your administration. Such a program could ultimately help stem inflation by including a mechanism for controlling health care costs, particularly as these costs are rising much faster than the overall rate of inflation and are effectively depriving many moderate income families of the quality medical services which are their right.

4. A national housing policy, with the federal government stimulating the construction of homes for low and moderate-income families and, if necessary, apportioning credit to enable families to obtain mortgages, is needed.

5. There must be a restructuring of our tax system, not simply to provide additional revenues, but to ensure elementary justice for ordinary Americans.

One further recommendation is that you personally meet with and your administration regularly consult the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights. The Leadership Conference is a coalition of organized labor, religious and civic groups, and the leading civil rights organizations. It serves as the basic vehicle for the formulation of programs to expand the rights of minorities and working people. If your administration is seriously



concerned with safeguarding and extending minority rights, it must have a close working relationship with the Leadership Conference.

I fully recognize that some of the proposals outlined here may not be politically feasible now. I am further aware that the actions necessary to achieve these objectives run counter to your philosophy and that of your political party.

However, I am convinced that these proposals must become the great goals of the nation. The critical problems facing American society demand a response far more decisive and creative than has been displayed thus far. The failure to take strong initiative will most certainly have disastrous consequences. America has happily been spared the phenomenon of widespread racial violence during the past six years. But if people are deprived of hope, particularly after a period when they have had reason to be most hopeful, the breaking point will eventually be reached. If unemployment continues to rise, and social mobility is thwarted, we may soon reach the point where people can endure no more.

These programs are not utopian. They are the logical response to a deepening economic and social crisis. As for the possibilities of their being realized, there is strong historical precedent for the kind of bold action I have urged. In 1932 few envisioned the Wagner Act, Social Security, and minimum wage legislation as realistic proposals. Yet within a decade they were written into law. And in 1960, few could have predicted that the



nation could soon enact a body of legislation which would destroy the legal structures of segregation. Yet because Presidents Roosevelt and Johnson were willing to throw the weight of their office behind these laws, they were passed.

There are time in history when strong leadership can transform a seemingly impossible political challenge into a positive reality. I believe that we have reached just such a period. Now, more than ever, we need strong leadership, for our society cannot accept the continuing burden of racial inequality.



October 22, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: GEOFFREY SHEPARD
FROM: STAN SCOTT
SUBJECT: Participants In The Civil
Rights Meeting With President Ford

Below is the list of attendees at Presidential meeting with civil rights leaders:

✓ Mr. Clarence Mitchell, NAACP -- will represent Roy Wilkins who is out of the country. The President has agreed to see Wilkins at a later date.

✓ Rev. Jesse Jackson, Operation PUSH

✓ Rev. Leon Sullivan, OIC

✓ Mr. Vernon Jordan, National Urban League

✓ Miss Dorothy Height, National Council of Negro Women

~~Mr. Carl Holman, National Urban Coalition~~

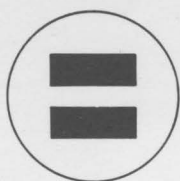
✓ Mrs. Pauline Ellison, The Links, Inc.

Dr. Carlton Goodlett, Pres., National Newspapers Association

✓ Mr. Bayard Rustin, Exec. Dir., A. Phillip Randolph Institute

Rev. Ralph Abernathy, Pres., SCLC -- While his organization is just about dead, other members of this group feel that it would be to the President's advantage to invite Abernathy ... despite his anti-everything record.





Telephone: (212) PLaza 1-0300

National Urban League, Inc.

Building for Equal Opportunity

55 East 52nd Street, New York, N.Y. 10022

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October

Twenty-fifth

1974

Dear Mr. President:

Encouraged by the initiative you have shown in convening this very important meeting with representatives of the black community and by your specific invitation to submit a position paper, I am pleased to present to you the enclosed "Recommendations of the National Urban League".

Our recommendations touch on some of the most urgent needs of black Americans in these troubled times. Fully appreciative of the spirit of consultation you have fostered, we are convinced that preparation of this paper is no mere exercise but rather a serious step in the continuing dialogue between your Administration and the black community.

We are hopeful you will find this paper of interest and will share your reactions with us.

Respectfully yours,

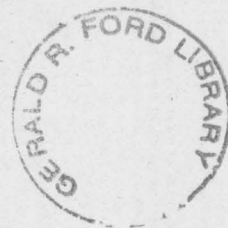
Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.,
Executive Director.

The Honorable Gerald R. Ford
President
United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500



RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE

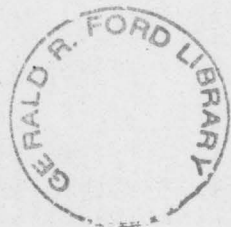
Prepared at the request of the President
of the United States and presented at his
meeting with black leaders, October 25, 1974
by Vernon E. Jordan, Jr., executive director,
National Urban League.



This paper presents some recommendations for Presidential action on major issues of special importance to 25 million black Americans. Our recommendations proceed from several assumptions central to our thinking. The first of these is that the economic and social conditions faced by black people has seriously worsened in recent years. Past gains have been wiped out by growing inflation, unemployment and continued discriminatory practices. By the government's own definition, only one in four black families can be considered to have achieved the living standard that is the norm in this nation.

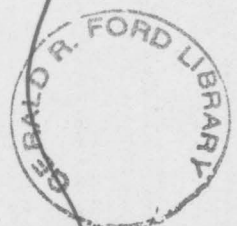
A second assumption is that there is much the federal government -- and the President -- can do to improve these conditions and to significantly lessen the despair and bitterness that increasingly engulfs the black community.

Finally, we are encouraged by the very fact of this meeting, and by the willingness of the President to enter into a dialogue on issues of importance to black citizens, and by the very request for recommendations, to which this paper represents our response.



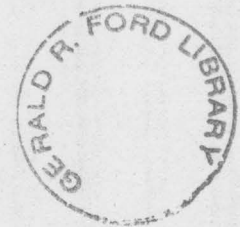
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

:Moral Leadership. The residue of Watergate, including the continuing trials and the reaction to the pardon of former President Nixon, has severely shaken public confidence in our institutions. This is shared even more widely among black citizens who have felt that the former President was openly antagonistic to their concerns and aspirations. On issues of importance to the black community, such as crime, welfare and integrated schools, the former Administration appeared to have framed its public positions in terms directly hostile to black people. It is this all-too recent experience that accounts for the dismay many of us have expressed over President Ford's press conference references to the Boston busing crisis. The issue is not the President's personal attitude toward busing. The issue rather is the President's responsibility to uphold the rulings of the courts, and his responsibility to encourage lawful compliance with those rulings and to avoid anything that may increase racial tensions.

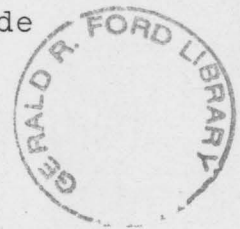


Restoring the faith of black citizens in national leadership and in the institutions of government will require the assumption of moral leadership on the part of the President. By moral leadership, in this context, we mean the affirmative use of his unique national forum to tell the nation that the long, noble struggle for equal rights and equal opportunities has not yet been won; that he is personally concerned with making his Administration a vehicle for winning that struggle, and that he is deeply concerned with the plight of black citizens and with the need for continued progress in civil rights and in economic and social equity. This goes beyond rectifying the errors in handling the Boston situation, although we urgently recommend Presidential involvement in demanding complete compliance with the Court's rulings.

We believe the President should, at the earliest opportunity, make a major national address on civil rights. He should pledge not only his support for expanded opportunities for black Americans, but should also pledge his leadership in this cause and help to galvanize renewed Congressional



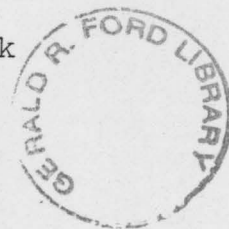
bi-partisan cooperation along the lines that categorized the creative period of progress in the 1960s. When black people heard President Johnson, standing in the well of Congress, proclaim "We Shall Overcome," they felt that their concerns and those of the nation were as one. When they heard that President Nixon chose to follow a policy of "benign neglect," they felt excluded from the national polity. A strong Presidential statement along the lines we have suggested will go a long way toward assuring black people of their full partnership in the nation, and will help guide white citizens to the path of cooperation in our multi-racial society.



:Employment. In all candor and without exaggeration, the problem of unemployment is at crisis dimensions in the black community. It is absolutely essential that the Administration's response to widespread joblessness among black people be appropriate to the scale of the problem. The proposed Community Improvement Corps fails to meet that standard.

In our view, the extent of unemployment has yet to be appreciated. The official nationwide rate of

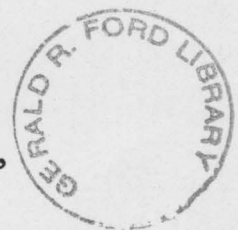
5.8 percent of the work force represents a gross underestimation of the problem. It does not include some three million people involuntarily working part time, many millions more who have given up hope of finding a job and are not registered as "unemployed," and women whose entry into the job market is prevented by lack of day care facilities. We believe true unemployment in this nation is in the double-digit area. Even if we use the suspect official rates, we find that black unemployment is double that for whites, or about ten percent; that ghetto areas experience rates of up to twenty percent, and that more than a third of young blacks are jobless. In addition, official statistics show that 1974 saw a sharp rise in the numbers of black male family heads unemployed and a similar rise in long-term black male unemployment. Both of these represent an alarming reversal of long-term trends. Along with this has been an appreciable decline in black labor force participation and in black multi-earner families, indicating a contraction of economic opportunities far beyond that suspected by economists. This situation



suggests that the black community is already experiencing a major economic Depression demanding vigorous national action.

The proposed Community Improvement Corps falls short of the bold imaginative effort needed. We have demonstrated that the six percent "trigger" has no relevance for blacks. It measures nationwide unemployment, thus ignoring areas of high local unemployment, which includes many major cities. High ghetto unemployment and center-city unemployment figures are often hidden by standard metropolitan area statistics. In addition, the CIC would amount to only a temporary work relief program serving a small fraction of the jobless.

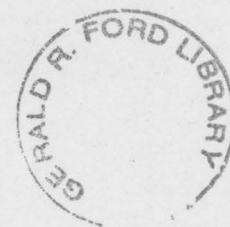
We recommend an immediate federal program of public service employment that would create one million jobs in needed public services immediately, with training, a career mobility component and special efforts to include young people and residents of high unemployment neighborhoods. This recommendation is among several proposed by the Black Economic Summit Meeting and, as a co-convenor of that Meeting, we take this opportu-



nity to associate ourselves again with its recommendations.

:Appointments. We have noted with approval the recent appointment of black citizens to important Presidential Commissions on manpower, inflation, and clemency. We urge that this principle be extended to other major areas of the Administration, especially in appointments to major operating positions in the Cabinet, the sub-Cabinet, the Executive Departments and regulatory agencies and the judiciary. There is within the black community a vast pool of trained, skilled and experienced administrators capable of filling major national positions. Black people have played prominent roles in past Administrations and even in the Nixon Administration, although to a more limited extent. As the inevitable personnel changes take place in the coming months, we believe it to be of prime importance that black people have their fair share of visible, policy-making positions at the highest level of government.

:National Health Insurance. Although we disagreed with the health proposals presented by the Nixon



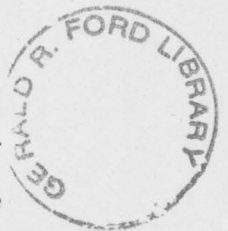
Administration, we considered them an important first step toward stimulating national debate and achieving a system of national health insurance. If anything, the need for federal action has grown in recent months, with the effects of inflation making further inroads on the quality of health care available to all Americans, and especially to black Americans whose increased unemployment and continued economic distress have drastically reduced access to medical attention and to employer and private insurance programs. We support a comprehensive national health system that is consumer-oriented, federally-supported, and assures dignified, quality health care for all Americans, regardless of race, economic circumstances, or geographic location. We strongly urge that the present Administration present to the nation its plan for a national health insurance system at the earliest possible time.

:Welfare. The mandate for overhauling the welfare system is clear. Galloping inflation has not been matched by allowance increases of a commensurate scale with the result that there has been a sharp decline in real income among the very poorest of our



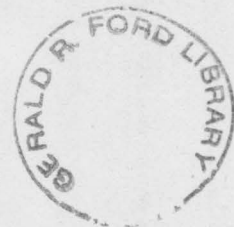
population. The much-publicized stabilization of the welfare rolls is a result of more stringent state and local requirements, and not of lessened poverty. Federalization and uniform national welfare standards would not only result in improved support for those most in need, it would also represent a major sharing of federal revenue with state and local governments in that it would free local revenues for other governmental functions.

We recommend then, that the Administration present to Congress a new welfare plan, including a decent benefit level, federal administration and uniform standards. And we urge that the President take the opportunity of presenting such a proposal to educate the public to some important facts about welfare. In addition to stressing the humane obligations society has to those who cannot work because of the malfunctioning of the economy, family obligations or personal problems, the President should depoliticize and defuse the racial content of previous discussions of welfare. There are, for example, more whites than blacks on welfare rolls, contrary to popular assumptions. Rather than being stacked with "chiselers," welfare



rolls are overwhelmingly made up of children and individuals and families that cannot now work, even if jobs were available, and they include significant numbers of people who do work but must have supplemental payments in order to survive. Half of all blacks who are poor do not get any welfare assistance at all. The public needs to know these facts, and it needs its President to tell it to them.

:Housing. The current housing crisis is not only a matter of temporary high interest rates. It is a compound of problems including sky-rocketing land costs, racial exclusion from predominately white suburbs, discriminatory zoning regulations, the disinvestment by financial institutions from mortgages in urban areas, high construction costs and other factors that, together, have placed the price of a home far beyond the financial capabilities of the average family. For the poor, the problem has been further compounded by the freeze on federal housing programs and by massive abandonment of inner-city housing. Ghetto housing constitutes the shame of this nation, and visits to some urban sections remind one of war-time devastation. Bad



housing conditions are a prime source of crime and of ill-health.

We urge federal action that would include not merely experiments in housing allowances, which should not be instituted without consumer safeguards, but also in adding to the existing housing stock for low-and moderate-income families. The immediate goal should be to raise construction of new housing units to the 2.5 million unit annual standard set by the Congress, and to expand the availability of housing for families earning below median incomes through active programs of rent allowances, neighborhood maintenance and rehabilitation projects, direct and indirect housing subsidies, construction of new housing units, and strict enforcement of federal civil rights laws. The government should also support formulation of a national land policy to insure rational growth.

We wish to point out that this, and other of our recommendations, can be largely self-supporting. Public service employment can be paid for through taxes on new earners and the resultant lower welfare



costs; health insurance amounts to shifting the dollars presently spent in the health care system to an insurance fund; and housing programs can be paid for by tax reforms that change the present system under which deductions of mortgage interest by affluent homeowners amount to a federal subsidy far greater than the cost of federal housing programs for the poor.

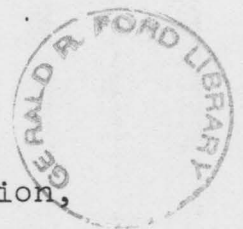
:Clemency. The President's amnesty program, while a commendable national effort at reconciliation fails to touch the bulk of black young men, who are not to be found among the ranks of draft resisters or deserters but among those who served their nation and were separated from the service with less than honorable discharges. Often, such discharges reflect less on the young men than on their superior officers who exhibited unenlightened racial attitudes and who often applied grossly discriminatory practices in meting out discretionary punishments. In addition to this is the related problem of "coded" honorable discharges, officially discontinued but undergoing a revival. Together, these issues impact negatively on hundreds of thousands of young men, many of them black, whose employment prospects are severely damaged although they served their flag and country.



We urge immediate and compassionate action to neutralize the effects of such discharges and codes, and to give these young men a fresh start on life. Some form of Presidential action for them is long overdue for they have truly "suffered enough." It should be obvious that the impact of military discharge practices that follow a man through his whole life is almost always unrelated in scale to the nature of his shortcomings or of his offenses during military service.

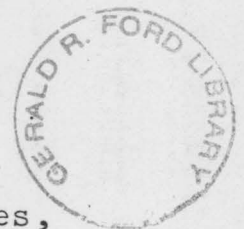
:Crime. The rising crime rate is a matter of concern for the nation as a whole and especially for black people, who are the prime victims of criminal acts. The rhetoric of recent years, largely confined to "get tough" appeals and constitutionally dubious proposals that have not been matched by limiting the incidence of criminal activities, is a proven failure.

We believe the time is ripe for new federal initiatives to deal with the crime problem. New programs of citizen participation in crime prevention, reforms of the criminal justice system, neighborhood-based probation programs, services to accused offenders,



and other programs aimed at cutting crime are necessary. But most important are steps to deal with the root causes of criminal behavior. We know that the typical accused offender is young, poor and less educated. As the ranks of such persons grow we can expect crime to increase. Therefore, an anti-crime effort must be grounded in programs directed at improving the education of poor youngsters, at creating jobs for them, and at improving the living conditions of their neighborhoods. There can be no short cuts to the long-term solution of the problem, and we urge this Administration to recognize the interrelationship between social conditions and crime.

In this regard, as in welfare and similar issues, we consider it of the utmost importance for the President, personally, to help educate the American people and also to help break the vicious stereotypes that plague black citizens. The persistent identification of black people with welfare and with crime have seriously impeded efforts to improve the living conditions of black citizens and to relieve the sufferings of the poor and of those who have been diverted into petty criminal behavior. To some extent such



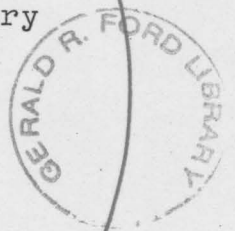
stereotypes were reinforced by some for political purposes, and they constitute a tragic slur on the overwhelming numbers of black people who are law abiding and who retain their dignity and their high aspirations in the midst of appalling social conditions. It is in the nature of leadership to foster a sense of community and of moral purpose that can help to bring people together behind common goals. It is this sense of community that is lacking today, and it is that lack which is in large part responsible for the social breakdown resulting in higher crime rates.

:Energy. The experience black people faced during the energy crisis must not be repeated. Many thousands of jobs were lost, oil prices were used as excuses for rent gouging, and millions of people shivered through a heatless winter. Black neighborhoods were prime victims of red-line practices that cut them off from access to home heating fuel and gasoline. It is this experience that makes it essential for the government to have a winter energy contingency plan, framed with the involvement of the black community,



to insure adequate access to energy resources for the poor during any possible recurrence of an energy shortage. Despite assurances that the situation is well in hand, the ever-present threat of new embargoes by Mideast oil producers, and the dependence on mild weather make this an important consideration.

:Education. Controversies over busing have obscured the real shortcomings of the educational system, a system that has not provided many black children with the skills and training needed for success in our complex economy. We believe that federal support for integrated schools will go a long way toward improving education for all children, and we also urge the federal government to undertake support for demonstration projects, for parental involvement, for measures that help to equalize local school district expenditures, for funds needed for compensatory education programs and for special programs serving youngsters who need more educational resources. We also urge continued federal support for the black colleges, which have been the backbone of black accomplishment in this nation.



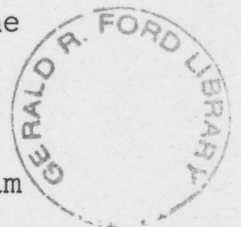
:Social Programs. One positive indication that the Administration is serious about the needs of the poor would be continuance of the Office of Economic Opportunity. It has proved its usefulness and the broad support it marshalled during its recent struggle for existence demonstrates that this is an agency that has been successful and has achieved support across the political spectrum. Other social service programs, too, are in trouble, and the Administration should save proven programs that fill important needs. We are concerned, for example, that innovative research in education will be paralyzed by cutbacks in the National Institute of Education, and that other areas of research and demonstration projects will go by the boards in an attempt to cut federal spending. Other areas, such as Defense, offer more attractive possibilities for budget-cutting than do those programs that may help solve long-standing domestic problems aggravated by inflationary pressures and economic recession.

:Revenue Sharing. Experience with the general revenue sharing experiment has shown it to be a serious failure and we urge that the Administration reconsider its



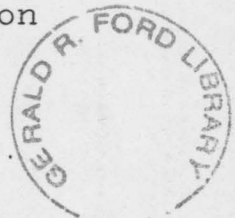
commitment to it. Analyses of expenditures by local governments show that poor people and minorities have not been beneficiaries of federal funds funneled into local governments. Anti-discrimination guidelines have not been enforced. In most cases revenue sharing funds have been less than the amounts previously available to localities under categorical grant programs. Local governments have used revenue sharing funds for general purpose spending that would otherwise have to be drawn from locally-raised revenues, applied federal grants to lowering local tax rates, and on occasion, have undertaken frivolous projects. In contrast to categorical programs, revenue sharing represents an immense transfer of federal resources that is unmonitored, and retards pursuit of national priorities. The program was devised as a means of sharing the federal bounty but today it is the federal government that is in a deficit situation and state and local governments that may, be in the aggregate, in a surplus situation.

We believe that the present revenue sharing program should be replaced by federal programs that channel funds into priority concerns in localities. Federal



assumption of welfare costs, programs in jobs, health and housing and some mass transit operating costs would, for example, constitute a revenue sharing program that helps bring services to people where they live and gives the federal government the ability to direct funds to priority concerns and to demand the accountability tax dollars deserve.

:Voting Rights Act of 1975. The Voting Rights Act will come up for renewal in 1975 and we urge the Administration to forcefully announce its support for extension at the earliest possible time. We would hope that this Act, which has been directly responsible for the political participation of millions of black citizens and has been the instrument that helped to bring democracy to some sections of our country, be greatly expanded to make registration and voting more feasible for more people. The National Urban League has documented the barriers to political participation that now exist in almost all localities and extension of the Act to include some form of permanent personal registration such as registration by postcard, would go a long way toward increasing citizen participation in our democracy and toward countering the demoralizing effects of recent revelations.



The limited nature of this paper should not suggest that there are no other issues of pressing concern to black Americans. The neglect of recent years, the economic situation, and the persistence of racial discrimination have compounded the multiplicity of problems afflicting black citizens today.

We have outlined some of the most urgent issues and made recommendations that, taken together with those of the Black Economic Summit Meeting, represent some of the solutions to the serious difficulties black people are experiencing. We fully recognize that these are difficult days for white citizens, too. In that context, we would point out that every single one of the recommendations we have made would also apply to white citizens and would help bring about an equitable solution to many of the difficulties facing all Americans.

We have shown, however, that regardless of the fact that other citizens share one or another aspect of our dilemma, the black minority has assumed a disproportionate share of the shortcomings of American society. The case for urgent federal



action is clear and overwhelming. The case for the President's personal involvement and public participation in such efforts is as great. We see the current national situation not as a problematic dilemma incapable of solution but as a great opportunity to fulfill the dreams and aspirations our nation has professed.

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