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Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.
Executive Director

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

TO: Pat
FROM: STAN

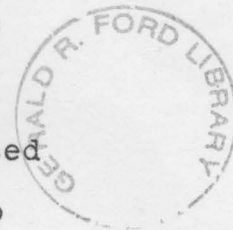
For your information.

File under
National Urban League



Address by
VERNON E. JORDAN, Jr.
Executive Director
NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE
at
NUL EQUAL OPPORTUNITY DAY DINNER
Hilton Hotel
NEW YORK CITY
Wednesday, November 15, 1972

I'd like to start by adding my thanks and congratulations to Joe Cullman and Louis Martin. Their selection for this high award is a tribute to their tireless efforts on behalf of social justice and their long record of friendship with the Urban League movement. Too often, we spend so much time tangling with our enemies or trying to convince the uncommitted that we neglect those steadfast friends who stood by us, in bad times as well as good. Tonight we can rectify that in part, through the public acknowledgement of our thanks to Joe Cullman and Louis Martin, and through them, in a symbolic way to all those dedicated, concerned, white and black citizens who have kept their faith in the goal of equality and in the mission of the Urban League.



And these are days that test men's faith in progress and in racial equality. This country seems to be entering a period in which the cycle of history takes a downward plunge, battering the hopes and aspirations of black people. The 1970's, like the 1870's, may come to spell the end of a reconstruction period of reform and hope. They may come to signify a period of repression and retrogression, a period in which the needs of black people and the nation itself for racial reconciliation and social change gave way to reaction, to increased suffering, and to racial antagonisms.

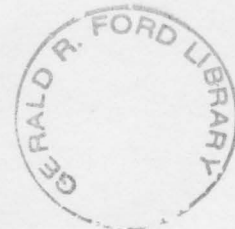
In the past year or so we have seen some liberals, former friends of civil rights and justice, melt away to other causes and concerns and encourage compromise or abandonment of positions vital to the survival of black Americans. When we talk of the need for welfare reform, they say: "Yes, but we must encourage a work ethic," without ever mentioning the unavailability of decent jobs for the unskilled, for the young, and for the poor who do work, and work hard, for less than a living wage. While we seek equal educational opportunities, they are concerned with stopping school buses. While we seek decent housing, they are more concerned with imprisoning the poor in ghetto slums. And all this goes under the name of pragmatism and realism!



It is very clear that the moral cowardice and retreat so amply demonstrated on these and other issues are reflections of a tragic loss of faith by so many Americans in the ideals and goals of this society. Instead of responding to the real problems and needs of the country, they take refuge in the manipulation of symbolic issues that evade the true nature of the serious questions we must face.

Busing, for example, is a phony issue that has come to the fore only because it is a convenient symbol for resistance to school desegregation. The issue of busing has become a device to roll back the Supreme Court's 1954 decision.

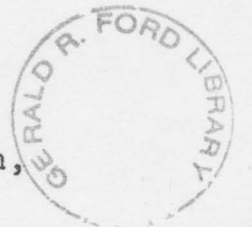
The realities behind the busing issue can no longer be hidden. The busing controversy is basically a "northernized" version of the southern resistance to desegregation in the 1950's. I see little difference between the agitators who stood in front of public schools in Little Rock and



New Orleans fifteen years ago, and the twisted faces and hate-filled words of white parents in Canarsie a few weeks ago. It is hard to understand the supposed differences between Alabama racists and those Michigan and New York liberals whose position would maintain school segregation and deny black children their constitutional rights.

The school bus is more than a vehicle for transportation; it is a vehicle for desegregation and the profound social changes that accompany it. In the weeks and months to come, there will be further attempts to stop the buses and to maintain unconstitutional school segregation. The busing issue did not die with Congress' action, nor did it end with the election campaign. It still looms before us as a major threat to turn the clock back to separate and unequal, to officially-imposed segregation, and to increased racial isolation.

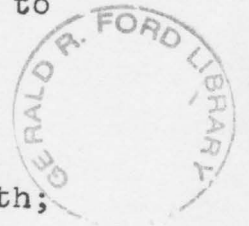
So too is the resistance to scatter-site public housing. Again, this is a northern phenomenon that is often strongest in the very areas where liberalism, in word, if not in deed, flourishes. In affluent Westchester County, a modest plan to distribute low-income housing to suburban towns on a fair-share basis by the state, has been suspended because of community opposition that is clearly based on fears that black people will move in.



New York City's Forest Hills section used to be thought of as the model of a liberal community, until a modest proposal to build new, decent housing there for about 800 low-income families resulted in racial fear and anger that has gutted the project. Desperately needed housing for black and for poor families was lost because of the rush to compromise with extremists.

All of this is ironic in light of the moral superiority claimed by the North in the 1950's, when it condemned the South's racism and declared loudly that the South would never integrate. The South has changed; reluctantly, and under pressure from the civil rights movement and from the government, but change it has. Now the South looks at northern hypocrisy and wants to know why the North cannot live up to its self-professed ideals of equality. The South asks why New York was the only state this year whose legislature passed an anti-busing bill and wants to know why it can integrate its schools without major problems while Michigan defies court orders.

The lessons of the last-ditch resistance in the North; the lesson to white people of the Canarsies and Westchesters and Forest Hills' is simple: "You can run, but you can't hide." Just as the South lost itself in a frenzy of resistance in the early 60's, the North is now desperately fighting to prevent black people from making social, economic and educational gains. But just as the South had to give way to change, so too, must the North.



The North cannot hide behind racially-restrictive suburbs, behind racially-exclusive schools and behind racially-protected jobs. The North must learn that, in the words of the Negro spiritual, "There's No Hiding Place Down Here." It must learn anew how to deal with a multi-racial society on the basis of equality, or lose what it has.

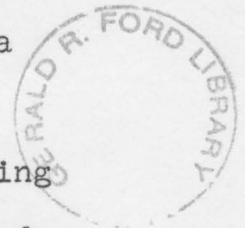
This nation will have to abandon the quota system -- that negative quota that has been applied to black people throughout the history of this nation: that negative quota that has persistently been used against us to exclude blacks from schools, housing, voting and jobs. We hear a lot about quotas these days -- about how un-American they are, about how they sabotage the so-called merit system. But unless one regards whiteness as constituting "merit," there is no merit system in operation. There is only a system of racial exclusion, with inferior schools, housing, and jobs reserved for black people. No one has ever argued in favor of rigid quotas to overcome inequality of opportunity, nor has anyone ever argued in favor of total reliance upon the goodwill and good faith of employers and government agencies. Instead, there has been developed a flexible system of guidelines for progress, goals to assure eventual equality of opportunity and timetables to measure progress. When we hear these reasonable mechanisms for insuring the success of



affirmative action programs labelled as "quotas" and attacked, we can only conclude that the artificial issue of "quotas" is yet another wall raised to exclude black people. And we can only wonder if the quota issue has been raised to create a smokescreen behind which blacks will be split away from their natural allies in other minority groups and among the labor movement.

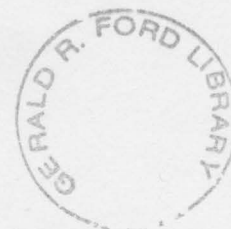
All of these issues arise at a time of social ferment occasioned by the loss of national confidence and the blurring of national goals. Not only has there been a fracturing of structures at a national level, but we see the same sort of divisiveness among those struggling for a more just society. "New minorities" have emerged, ranging from newly articulate minority groups, to the rise of the unmeltable ethnics, to the growth of militancy for women's rights. In the process, the black struggle has tended, in the minds of many, to become submerged in the clamor of other groups and other causes.

I believe this is an unfortunate development, not only because the problems afflicting black people are far too serious to be shoved to the back burner, but because it can be fairly said that the progress that can be made by other groups is dependent upon the progress made by black people. The civil rights movement is the moral barometer of this nation. To the degree that black rights are expanded and black progress is made, other groups too, will



benefit. This has been true in the past and it will be true in the future. The goals, tactics and accomplishments of other human rights groups, be they ethnic or women, are clearly derived from the civil rights movement, which has served as the source of strategies and inspiration for other groups. Its demands all clearly benefit other minorities as well. Such change as has come about has been due to the efforts of the civil rights movement of the 60's, and if we see in the 70's a dilution of that movement; if we see conflict among minorities fighting for the scraps from the table of this society, then we will no doubt see defeat for all minorities.

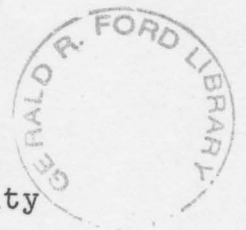
It is for this reason that the Urban League, which has been in the business of trying to bring about social change for over sixty years, has a responsibility to share our experiences, our technical knowledge and expertise, and our resources with other groups, and to strive to build effective coalitions on issues of mutual concern with others who know poverty and discrimination first hand. We must be ever mindful that this nation is capable of providing what is due to all of us, and that the system that keeps us all down is the only beneficiary of the strategy of playing one group off against the other.



The Urban League has its mandate from the ghettos of America, and from its long history of struggle, to fight for change and for America's dispossessed. It is our duty to remain true to that heritage and to remain true to the basic interests of our primary constituency. This means we can never give up our important role as advocate for America's black citizens. We can never stop speaking out on the issues that spell survival for black people.

We will speak out and we must be heard. We must be heard by the business community, whose stake in the cities and in the rapidly urbanizing suburbs is as great as our own. We must be heard in the media, which rushes to sensationalize fabricated fantasies about non-existent black murder gangs numbering in the thousands, they say, while neglecting the realities of black life and black institutions. We must be heard in local, state and federal legislatures, where the moral crusade and fervor of the 60's seems to have given way to cynicism and expedience in the 70's.

And we must be heard in the White House. As the President enters his second term, he has the opportunity to exercise in domestic affairs the same boldness and initiative lavished on foreign policy during the first Administration. He entered office with a reputation as an anti-Communist hard-liner, and closed his first term with a feast in Peking, a trade deal with the Russians,



and what may be an end to the war in Vietnam. He enters his second term of office with a reputation for domestic conservatism and a perception among many black people and among white Southerners and northern backlashes, that he is unsympathetic to the cause of black equality. But it is this very belief that gives the President the freedom to embark upon bold new initiatives on the domestic front. Just as his diplomatic initiatives to China left the hard-line anti-Communists helpless and confused, so too, new moves to bring about social progress and reconciliation among the races can take the initiative away from the hard-line backlashes.

The President then, has the political freedom and the moral duty to act responsibly. I believe too, that he has the desire to escape the stigma of being the President who, on the 200th anniversary of the founding of the nation, presided over domestic chaos, poverty and racial strife. The extent to which he does act may depend upon his willingness to open wider the doors of his office and of his Administration to black leadership and to black voices. His first Administration was characterized by the "benign neglect" of black people in making decisions affecting their lives.

I ask tonight that the President reverse this policy of benign neglect in the White House. I ask tonight that the President, who saw fit to hold summit meetings with Mao and Brezhnev, engage in domestic summitry as well.

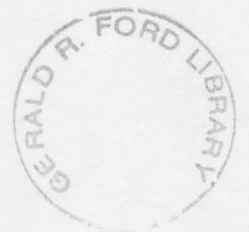


I ask tonight that the President convene individual or collective meetings in which black leadership representing all spectrums of community opinion have the opportunity to present the case for black people to his Administration.

I ask tonight that the President establish on-going consultations with black leadership and with black organization that allows black interests to be represented in the crucial policy decisions that will so profoundly affect the masses of black Americans. I ask that this second Administration become truly responsive to the needs and aspirations of black people; that it go where it did not go in the campaign -- into the ghettos, into the black churches, into the black colleges; that it speak to black people directly and embody their aims and their desires, too.

We ask no special favors as special Americans. We have been treated as special Americans for far too long. We have received special treatment in the form of discrimination and bigotry for far too long. We ask of this pluralistic society that it simply recognize our just claims for an equal share in the nation our sacrifices helped to build.

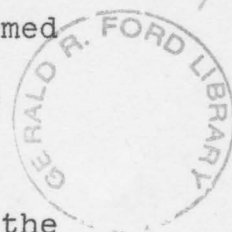
The Urban League is still helping to build that nation, and to build into the black community those services that will close the gap between white and black, between rich and poor. In our many programs of creative partnership with the federal government and in those funded by the private sector, the Urban League serves the people.



In the past twelve months, our on-the-job training programs have placed nearly 5,000 people in better paying jobs, far surpassing our contracted goals. For every dollar spent on training costs, the individual trainee gets back \$155 in wages. Our Labor Affairs program placed about 3,000 apprentices, trainees, journeymen, and others in well-paid jobs in industries known as tough for minorities to get a foothold. About 8,000 veterans got jobs, housing, education and counselling from the Urban League.

In a few short weeks, our Citizenship Education program directly registered about 40,000 new voters, about a third of the previously unregistered blacks in the cities in which it operated, and indirectly stimulated the political interest and involvement of many thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands more. These efforts will continue, for we are not interested in one-shot blitz registration drives for one election -- we seek to build day-by-day and week-by-week, the political awareness, understanding and involvement in the black community that will ultimately result in informed political participation and social changes that benefits black citizens and the nation.

Some 1,500 youngsters are getting their education at the Urban League's street academies. Four thousand low and moderate income families are housed in Urban League-built housing developments. Every day Urban League offices around the country are jammed with thousands of black people coming to us for help in solving basic problems -- jobs, food, housing, schools, welfare, police and others.



Yes, the Urban League will continue to deliver to black people in the 70's, as it has in the past. We will continue to fight every effort to force upon us a return to the past, for we believe that what appears to be the irresistible is merely that which is unresisted. The 1970's is a far different era than the 1870's. The end of the First Reconstruction found black people largely uneducated, weak, and still in the grip of regional domination. The period in which it will be decided whether or not the Second Reconstruction will end, finds black Americans far stronger. We have tasted the sweet fruit of victories. Long delayed and betrayed dreams have taken on the flesh of reality. Where once we were friendless and oppressed, we now number among our ranks worthy allies in government, in the courts, in industry, in labor, and in the universities. Our cause has burned deep into the moral structure of the best of America, and it cannot be so easily abandoned or forgotten.

There is also, in our time of troubles in the 70's, a new black man. No longer chained to peonage, he is fully urbanized. No longer unlettered, he is now possessed of educational and technical achievements. No longer kept segregated and separated, he knows his worth and his rights. The new black man of the 1970's has the pride, the resources, the sophistication, the allies, and above all the determination born of a heritage of desperation and survival, to prevent the loss of the



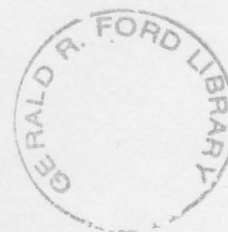
smallest of his freedoms or the compromise of the least of his principles. The length of the strides he has made has impressed upon him the distance that still lies before him, and he plunges forth firm in the conviction that he will never allow anyone to push him back.

If the Second Reconstruction does indeed come to a tragic close, it will be with a bang, not a whimper. It will end with the nation enveloped in grief and in possible tragic eruptions that are appalling even to contemplate. But it need not end. There can be no freeze on social justice and on racial progress.

We in this society have progressed to the point where our lives are linked and the complex web of our social, economic and political relationships so strongly intertwined, that a return to the overt racism of the past seems unlikely. As Whitney Young used to say, "We may have come here in different ships, but we're all in the same boat now."

Whether that boat sinks in the brutal waves of repression and racism, or whether it sails on in a good tide toward the promised shores of true freedom and equality is up to us, all of us.

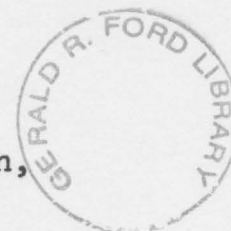
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Address by
VERNON E. JORDAN, Jr.
Executive Director
NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE
at the
1972 CONVENTION,
SAVINGS BANKS ASSOCIATION of NEW YORK STATE
Boca Raton, Florida
THURSDAY, November 9, 1972

It is a great pleasure to be here today, in part because I believe your invitation to me reflects your concern for the views and needs of the minority community and for our common urban future. For my part, I am grateful for the opportunity to discuss with you today the role of financial institutions in our cities, for it is on the creative investment role of banks and other lending institutions that the survival of the cities may depend. And I should add that the phrase "survival of the cities" implies the survival of black Americans, who are the most urbanized of our population, as well as the survival of the economic and financial institutions of this nation.

Race, money and housing. These are the three intertwined elements that constitute the core of the problems of urban survival. The cities are becoming blacker; money is not being invested in urban centers to the extent necessary for their continued prosperity, and the housing stock is deteriorating at a rate not compensated for by new construction or by expanded housing opportunities for black and lower income families.



This explosive mixture of elements has been further intensified by the terrible failure of some federal programs to assist low-income home-buyers. The scandal-ridden FHA, thanks to corrupt examiners, dishonest speculative brokers, and fraudulent lending institutions, has admitted that the government may have to take over a quarter of a million defaulted homes at a cost estimated to be in the hundreds of millions of dollars. The failure of these programs has been compounded by the withdrawal of private financing from center-city housing that has resulted in a nationwide problem of housing abandonment. In New York City alone, at least 100,000 housing units have been simply abandoned by their owners, leaving whole neighborhoods looking like shelled battle zones.

Given this urban housing crisis, it seems to me that financial institutions in the private sector, and most especially those savings banks and savings and loan associations that have been the traditional backbone of the mortgage market, have a special responsibility to intensify their urban investments and to seize the opportunity to demonstrate what creative private initiative can do to build a better urban environment.

I must report today, that there is every indication that such institutions are not doing their part. It appears rather, that these institutions are participating in a massive disinvestment policy that undercuts their own growth, is helping to destroy the cities in which they operate, and betrays their depositors. It seems that many



institutional lenders have ruled large portions of the cities as off-limits for mortgage loans, and have withdrawn credit from private owners in those areas.

The justification for this has been that such areas are poor investment risks, a judgment often made solely on the demographic basis of changing racial composition of the population. Such a judgment is demonstrably false in light of the racial tax black people pay for their housing. Even in neighborhoods in which lower income black families replace middle-class whites, rents tend to increase and the new tenants pay a higher percentage of their income for rent. Race should play no factor in determining a building's or a neighborhood's investment potential.

What actually happens is that the decision to disinvest become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Institutional lenders refuse to grant new mortgages or to refinance existing ones at less than exorbitant rates. This restriction in capital flow has three effects: First, it severely diminishes the supply of funds for rehabilitation, modernization, and repair. Second, it closes off the avenue that most owners use to make a profit. And finally and most important, it signals to property-owners that financial institutions no longer consider a particular area to be viable. The only rational economic strategy left for owners, black or white, to pursue is to maximize their cash flows as quickly as possible. As a result maintenance declines, taxes are unpaid, welfare tenants are recruited, overcrowding is permitted, and, in the end, the building is abandoned. The resulting decline of the neighborhood is then taken as proof of the soundness of the

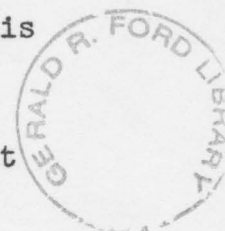


original decision not to invest. The self-fulfilling prophecy has closed its circle.

The National Urban League has long been concerned with housing opportunities for black and minority citizens. Our housing programs cover more than sixty years of our history, and current Urban League programs such as the well-known "Operation Equality" and our role as sponsor of non-profit low-income housing are probably familiar to you. Two years ago we conducted a national survey of housing abandonment that laid bare the extent of this problem. Before the year ends we will release yet another document I know will interest you, not only because it deals with an important part of New York, but because it studies and documents the role of savings banks and savings and loan associations in the process of disinvestment in real estate in the Bronx.

Although this important research study is not yet complete, I think it is important that I share with you some of our preliminary findings, for they are of vital concern to this audience.

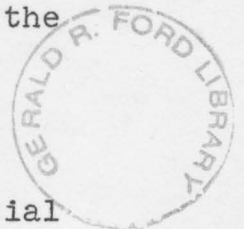
The Urban League's housing staff studied the investment policies of twelve savings banks and savings and loan associations that have a total of 36 offices in the Bronx -- about two-thirds of their total offices. These institutions were chosen because too little attention has been paid to the interaction between urban housing and bank investment policies, and the Bronx was chosen because it is an area undergoing drastic population changes and high levels of housing abandonment.



Our staff found that these financial institutions experienced substantial growth during the sixties. Assets, deposits, and first mortgages sky-rocketed in that decade of boom. The three largest banks, for example, nearly doubled their deposits in that decade, which, incidentally saw an influx of blacks and Puerto Ricans and an outflow of white middle-class families.

Despite rising assets and deposits, our researchers found a pervasive, thorough pattern of disinvestment by those institutions in Bronx County. From 1960 to 1970, the number of mortgages granted in the Bronx declined from 1,535 to only 483, especially accelerating in the second half of the decade. Some of the individual banks' figures are shocking: Bank A made 604 mortgages in the Bronx in 1960, in 1970, it granted only 24; Bank B declined from 100 to 15; Bank C, from 54 to 14. Only two banks increased their number of Bronx mortgages, although their investments in the Bronx remain small compared with their total outstanding mortgages. In 1970, for all of the institutions we studied, only 12.7 percent of the number of all mortgages made were in the Bronx, and these accounted for only 17.8 percent of the value of all mortgages made.

After documenting these facts, the Urban League's researchers asked: Why? Why did community-based financial institutions desert their home communities to export badly-needed capital to areas outside their base of operations? The computers were fed the statistical information and a number of variables and the answer is Race. In 1960, the



primary -- in fact the only -- statistically significant variable was size, that is, the proportion of one-to-four family homes. But for 1970, while size remained an important variable, it was found that racial factors accounted for 41 percent of the variation in the number of mortgages granted by the institutions in the 14 community planning districts located in Bronx County. The changing racial composition of the Borough resulted in changed mortgage lending policies.

We see in this case study a model of massive disinvestment by community financial institutions. We see how a key element in the private sector has helped to accelerate the forces leading to the decline of an entire county. We see how the hard-earned dollars of poor blacks and Puerto Ricans are used, not to improve their own housing and neighborhoods, but to finance housing in racially-restricted areas outside of the Bronx. We see, too, how the myths that result in self-fulfilled prophecies help to put our cities on the downward spiral of decline and stagnation.

What then, is to be done? I can offer a few suggestions today, and I would hope that in the days to come your Convention will make others.

First, I believe that financial institutions must restore a balance between the money they receive from a community and the money they invest in it. Banks in the Bronx, for example, should invest the deposits of that community in the Bronx, unless there is a capital excess, which is obviously not the case here. I fully understand that you have a deep



responsibility to your depositors to preserve their funds and to guarantee their interest. I don't see why an enlightened investment policy in the Bronx should be any more risky than financing retirement villages in Arizona, but I think the safety of funds can be guaranteed by state or federal guarantees of interest rates, and by a system of either subsidies to banks to compensate them for extra time spent in underwriting loans in low-income areas, or a state or federally-sponsored system of pooling and guaranteeing loans in such areas.

Secondly, financial institutions should make a special effort to hire and train minority bank officers and loan officers. I know that many are doing just that, but the overall national picture for savings and loan associations is dismal. A study by HUD recently revealed that in 50 large cities, only four percent of loan officers and appraisers and five percent of bank officers were drawn from the minority population, while only eight percent of S&L's had minority board members or loan committee members.

Third, I would like to see the community-based financial institutions take the lead in fighting speculative block-busting tactics that destroy neighborhoods, defraud individuals, and encourage housing segregation. It would certainly be in your interest to have strict regulation of real estate brokers and dealers, and to institute a number of important changes in foreclosure and receivership practices.

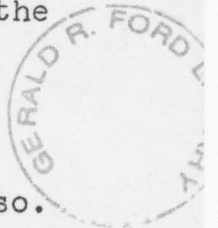
Finally, I would hope that your banks recognize more fully that their fate is welded to that of the community in which they do business. If houses are abandoned, garbage is



uncollected, crime and drugs on the upswing, financial institutions will also decline. I believe there must be a greater involvement in the life of the community and a greater spirit of cooperation with community-based organizations that are struggling to improve the quality of life. As center-city neighborhoods change, banks should enter into a mutually beneficial cooperative relationship with social service institutions like the Urban League or other agencies. The Urban League's programs of housing counselling, job-training and recruitment and others are programs that can serve the best interests of the black and minority community, the city as a whole, and financial institutions with neighborhood roots. I would hope that the near future will see a creative partnership between members of your Association and Urban Leagues in New York State.

I have not come here today to berate you or to condemn the record of your member banks. I come here instead to call your attention to the grave nature of the housing situation and the effect of institutional disinvestment, and to ask you to do something about it. I believe you will.

I believe you will because it is in your interest to do so. Present policies of disinvestment are suicidal. By assisting in the rapid decline of the very neighborhoods banks depend on for deposits, they undercut their own operations. The inevitable day will come when your branches will lose their depositors, when the neighborhoods decline to the point where you cannot function effectively, and when your institutions, without a sound community base, will no longer be viable.

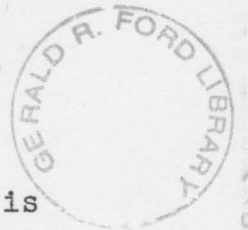


I believe you will do something about this situation too, because you know as well as I do that it cannot continue. As city, state and federal governments make the connection between such massive disinvestment and the urban housing crisis and as the process of abandonment continues at a higher pitch, they must step in and take action. And that action can only mean externally-imposed restraints upon your business and your operations, restraints I know you wish to avoid.

I believe you will because I think you are serious about perserving your institutions as community institutions with a commitment to the people who live and work in your neighborhoods and who deposit their savings with your banks. Your Convention theme -- "Helping People... That's What Savings Banks Are All About" -- is an illustration of the way you see your role in the community, and of the desire to use the deposits in your banks for the good of the whole community and of all of the people.

And finally, I believe you will want to act because it is right; because most people in banking are decent human beings who would rather do right than do wrong, and because you have families you must face daily and growing children who, like their contemporaries, are questioning business and the values that govern it. And I know that you, just as I, look in the mirror every morning and face yourself and wonder if the day ahead will make a difference, perhaps some small difference, to another human being and to our society.

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Will the 1970s Mark End of Black Gains?

By VERNON E. JORDAN JR.

THESE are days that test men's faith in progress and in racial equality. This country seems to be entering a period in which the cycle of history takes a downward plunge, battering the hopes and aspirations of black people.

The 1970s, like the 1870s, may come to spell the end of a reconstruction period of reform and hope. They may come to signify a period of repression and retrogression, a period in which the needs of black people and the nation itself for racial reconciliation and social change give way to reaction, to increased suffering, and to racial antagonisms.

In the past year or so we have seen some liberals, former friends of civil rights and justice, melt away to other causes and concerns and encourage compromise or abandonment of positions vital to the survival of black Americans.

When we talk of the need for welfare reform, they say: "Yes, but we must encourage a work ethic," without ever mentioning the unavailability of decent jobs for the unskilled, for the young, and for the poor who do work, and work hard, for less than a living wage.

Moral Cowardice

While we seek equal educational opportunities, they are concerned with stopping school buses. While we seek decent housing, they are more concerned with imprisoning the poor in ghetto slums. And all this goes under the name of pragmatism and realism!

It is very clear that the moral cowardice and retreat so amply demonstrated on these and other issues are reflections of a tragic loss of faith by many Americans in the ideals and goals of this society. Instead of responding to the real

problems and needs of the country they take refuge in the manipulation of symbolic issues that evade the true nature of the serious questions we must face.

Busing, for example, is a phony issue that has come to the fore only because it is a convenient symbol for resistance to school segregation. The issue of busing has become a device to roll back the Supreme Court's 1954 decision.

The realities behind the busing issue can no longer be hidden. The busing controversy is basically a "northernized" version of the southern resistance to desegregation in the 1950s. I see little difference between the agitators who stood in front of public schools in Little Rock and New Orleans 15 years ago, and the twisted faces and hate-filled words of white parents in Canarsie a few weeks ago. It is hard to understand the supposed differences between Alabama racists and those Michigan and New York liberals whose position would maintain school segregation and deny black children their constitutional rights.

The school bus is more than a vehicle for transportation; it is a vehicle for desegregation and the profound social changes that accompany it. In the weeks and months to come, there will be further attempts to stop the buses and to maintain unconstitutional school segregation.

The busing issue did not die with Congress' action, nor did it end with the election campaign. It still looms before us as a major threat to turn the clock back to separate and unequal, to officially-imposed segregation, and to increased racial isolation.

So too is the resistance to scatter-site public housing. Again, this is a northern phenomenon that is often strongest in the very areas where liberalism, in word, if not in deed, flourishes. In affluent Westchester County, a modest state plan

to distribute low-income housing to suburban towns on a fair-share basis has been suspended because of community opposition that is clearly based on fears that black people will move in.

New York City's Forest Hills section used to be thought of as the model of a liberal community, until a modest proposal to build new, decent housing there for about 800 low-income families resulted in racial fear and anger that has gutted the project. Desperately needed housing for black and poor families was lost because of the rush to compromise with extremists.

All of this is ironic in light of the moral superiority claimed by the North in the 1950's, when it condemned the South's racism and declared that the South would never integrate.

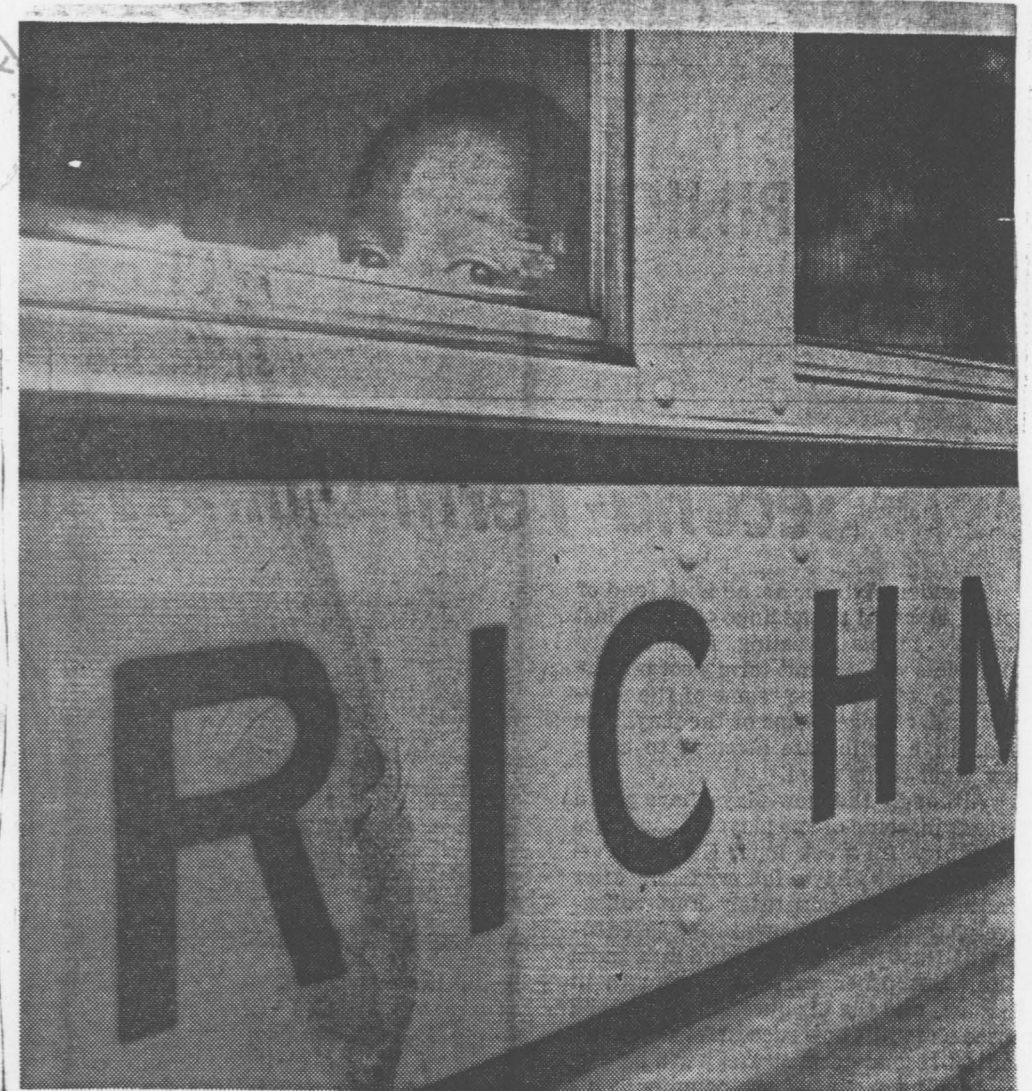
The South has changed. Reluctantly, and under pressure from the civil rights movement and the government. But changed it has.

'You Can't Hide'

Now the South looks at northern hypocrisy and wants to know why the North cannot live up to its self-professed ideals of equality. The South asks why New York was the only state this year whose legislature passed an anti-busing bill, and wants to know why it can integrate its schools without major problems while Michigan defies court orders.

The lessons of the last-ditch resistance in the north; the lesson to white people of the Canarsies and Westchesters and Forest Hills' is simple: "You can run, but you can't hide."

Just as the South lost itself in a frenzy of resistance in the early 60s, the North is now desperately fighting to prevent black people from making social, economic and educational gains.



But just as the South had to give way to change, so too, must the North.

The North cannot hide behind racially-restrictive suburbs, behind racially-exclusive schools and behind racially-protected jobs.

This nation will have to abandon the quota system—that negative quota that has been applied to black people throughout the history of this nation, that negative quota that has persistently

been used to exclude blacks from schools, housing, voting and jobs.

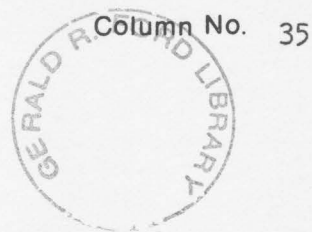
We hear a lot about quotas these days—about how un-American they are, about how they sabotage the so-called merit system. But unless one regards whiteness as constituting "merit," there is no merit system in operation. There is only a system of racial exclusion, with inferior

See JORDAN, Page D-4

To Be Equal

CENSUS UNDERCOUNT MEANS LOST DOLLARS

by
Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.



You might be one of the 5.3 million people the U. S. Census Bureau admits it did not count in the 1970 Census. If so, that means that your neighborhood loses federal aid apportioned on a per-capita basis, including revenue sharing money, and shares less than it ought to in other federal and state programs.

Over five million people not counted may not seem much on a national basis in a total population of over 200 million, but its impact on localities, especially on hard-pressed cities and towns with substantial minority populations, is important.

The bulk of the "missing persons" are minorities; almost eight percent are black, as against less than a two percent undercount for whites. Spanish-speaking people were probably undercounted more than any other group, since the Census forms were in English only.

How much have key cities lost because of the undercount? It's hard to say exactly, but a good estimate, based on the Census Bureau's own figures of the undercount, indicates that New York State lost about \$15.1 million in revenue sharing funds alone, while California lost almost as much.

Major cities lost large amounts that could be used to help relieve the crushing problems they face. New York City lost about \$6.7 million; Chicago, \$2.5 million; Washington, D. C., \$1.5 million, and other cities similar amounts depending on their size and their minority populations.

What ought to be done to rectify a mistake the Census Bureau admits occurred? After all, the census is no academic head-counting exercise; it is the basis not only for allocation of federal and state funds, but also for political representation and the drawing of political districts at all levels of government.

The Census Bureau itself wants another census in 1975, instead of waiting until 1980 as mandated by the Constitution. There is a lot to be said for cutting the census interval from ten to five years in our highly mobile nation. There is an

...more..

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agricultural census every five years counting every farm animal and tractor in rural America. If we can count chickens every five years why not people?

But Congress refused a mid-decade Census so we must deal with these figures for the next ten years. I have already suggested an across-the-board increase in official population figures to account for the estimated undercount, but such suggestions have met with a defeatist response that simply says that the national figures can't be adjusted on a local basis.

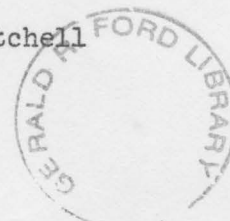
Now the National Urban League's Research Department has come up with a formula it says can be applied to correct the undercount. The researchers went to the Census Bureau's own estimated national undercounts of different sub-groups of the population and devised a system of adjusting local figures.

They make clear that this is an interim device to be used in the current emergency. Eventually, population researchers and the Bureau may come up with a fool-proof method of compensating for national undercounts, but until then, it makes sense to put the League's method to immediate use in all population-based formulas on federal and state aid.

After all, this wouldn't be the first time the government used nation-wide figures to deal with localities. The famous poverty index, for example, applies a national definition of poverty regardless of the significant cost of living variations in different regions. The national poverty index is used as a national standard for allocating funds to localities; so too, the suggested revisions in population figures would be used as a standard for disbursement of funds until the next census.

#

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COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT
National Urban League
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73-TBE-35
8/29/73

NEWS from National Urban League

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

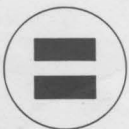
CONTACT: James D. Williams
Director
Communications Department
(212) 751-0300 (EXT. 301/302)

THE FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF A TELEGRAM
SENT THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1973, TO THE
PRESIDENT BY VERNON E. JORDAN, JR., EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE.

"A nation badly shaken by the resignation of the Vice President, looks hopefully to you for wisdom and courage in selecting a nominee for the vacant office. I know that you will act in the best interests of the country, excluding all considerations save that of what is best for the nation. In that context, I respectfully ask that Senator Edward Brooke of Massachusetts be your nominee. Possessed of enormous integrity, strength and ability, Senator Brooke could help bring a troubled people together again, could help restore confidence in the institutions that we have respected and believed in for almost 200 years. An intensely compassionate American, Senator Brooke has in his own state united people of different political philosophies, different races, different economic backgrounds. Within the U. S. Senate he has earned the deep respect of his colleagues on both sides of the aisle. He has done all of this without bitterness, rancor or divisiveness. This is what America needs in these grave

more....

Building for Equal Opportunity
55 East 52nd Street
New York, N.Y. 10022
(212) PLaza 1-0302



222222 - NUL

times -- a healer, a restorer of faith, an individual representing
the best that is America. Senator Brooke is this individual. May
God be with you as you ponder the awesome decision that only you
can make."

: : : :

73-126
10/11/73



55 EAST 52ND STREET • NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10022

national urban league

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

January
Sixteenth
1 9 7 4

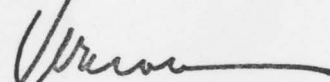
Dear Stan:

You put together a good meeting for the Vice President yesterday, and I expect a great deal to come from it.

Enclosed herewith is copy of a letter to the Vice President inviting him to speak at the Urban League's Annual Conference in July. I urge you to urge him to accept -- which, it seems to me, is another way of creating the kind of credibility that we discussed in the meeting.

Warm personal regards.

Sincerely,



Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.
Executive Director.

Encl:

Mr. Stanley Scott
Special Assistant to the President
White House
Washington, D.C.





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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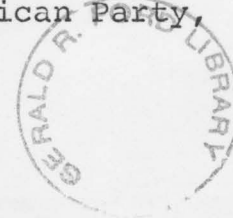
January
Fourth
1974

Dear Mr. Vice-President:

The National Urban League will convene its 64th Annual Conference at the San Francisco Hilton/Hotel St. Francis, July 28-31, 1974. At last year's Conference, held in Washington, D.C., more than 6,000 people representing a cross-section of American life and drawn from across the country, attended. Thus, our Conference offers an unparalleled forum for searching and meaningful examinations of national policies and programs that affect black people and other minorities.

On behalf of the National Urban League, it is my great privilege to extend to you a cordial invitation to be the principal speaker at our annual Federal Resources Luncheon on Monday, July 29 at 12:00 Noon.

The Federal Resources Luncheon is a highlight of our Conference and is a most appropriate forum for federal leadership to present its views on governmental and national issues that impact on the lives of minority citizens. We have been most pleased that in recent years a number of Administration officials have taken the opportunity to address our Conference. These include the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, James T. Lynn, the Secretary of Labor, Peter J. Brennan, the then-Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, Elliot L. Richardson, and the Deputy Director, Office of Management and Budget, Frederic V. Malek, as well as the Chairman of the Republican Party, George Bush.



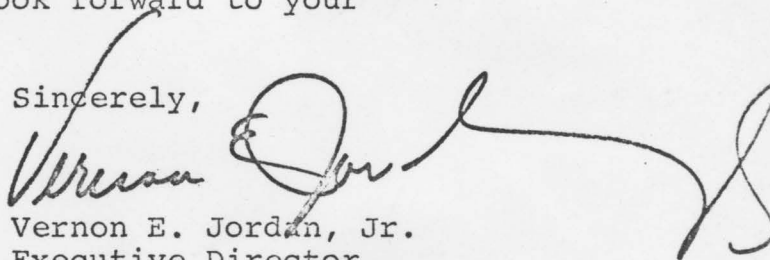
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The Honorable Gerald R. Ford
Page two
January 4, 1974

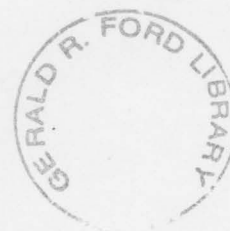
It would indeed be an honor for us to welcome you to address the nation's largest annual forum on race relations -- and while I appreciate the burdens of your office and the demands on your schedule, I look forward to your affirmative response.

Sincerely,



Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.
Executive Director.

The Honorable Gerald R. Ford
Vice-President
United States of America
Executive Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20500



To Be Equal



Column No. 6

THE STATE OF THE UNION
by
Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.

It might have been folly to expect a President besieged by Watergate and by an impeachment investigation to come up with a solid set of legislative proposals in his State of the Union message, but I think he could have dealt a lot more squarely with the American people.

He must have known, for example, that his government was on the verge of releasing statistics showing the biggest monthly jump in unemployment in years. Yet he went ahead and told his television audience that: "There will be no recession" in the coming year.

Those words sounded doubly hollow to black people, who have been experiencing a major economic Depression. Our unemployment rate is double that for whites, our unreported unemployment is far higher, many black workers are being laid off because of the energy shortage, and inflation is eating away at our constricted incomes.

So we don't have to wait to the end of the year to find out if there's been a recession, we're in it up to our necks as it is and Washington doesn't seem to know it.

But what really rankles is that black people and the problems of blacks didn't rate a single mention in the speech. There was a time, and not so long ago either, that a State of the Union message was an opportunity for Presidential moral leadership.

There were frequent references to the special needs of black citizens and affirmations to do right by minorities.

This year, not a word. Total neglect. It is hard for black people to interpret this in any way other than that we don't count anymore, that the Administration doesn't consider our needs and aspirations.

The President's ten-point agenda for action in 1974 contained only two items of direct major interest to black people -- health insurance and welfare. Energy was a priority but not in terms of cushioning the negative impact of the energy shortage on minorities. And housing, in a housing-short country, couldn't make the list of the "big ten."

more.....

22222 -TO BE EQUAL COLUMN #6 (VEJjr)

And even the two items of immediate concern were couched in language that was either too vague to be useful or based on false premises.

On health insurance, the President promised a plan that would fall short of the comprehensive national health program the nation needs. And he misrepresented a number of aspects of the health care issue, especially by stating that the guiding principle of the program should be to "make sure that our doctors will be working for their patients and not for the Federal Government."

Aside from the fact that even the most sweeping national health insurance plans would preserve the doctor's independence, that should not be the "guiding principle." The guiding principle has to be to insure that each and every person, regardless of race or income or geographic location, has high quality, comprehensive, dignified medical care. Anything short of that isn't a national health program at all; it's another patchwork scheme to preserve a failed system.

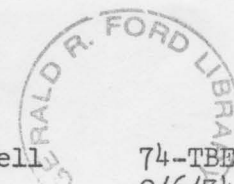
The proposal for welfare reform was welcome, but there too, the President missed an opportunity to enlighten the public about the real nature of the problem. He trotted out the old rhetoric about "abuses" and cutting caseloads and avoided talking about the real issue, which is that our economy has failed to provide decent jobs for all who can work and humane, dignified support for those who cannot.

The fault is not with the poor, the victims of the system, but with a malfunctioning economy that creates a large pool of white and black poor. And he should have stressed the fact that more whites than blacks are on the welfare rolls and that the problem transcends race. Instead, he left intact the widespread belief that welfare is a "black problem," thus making it that much more difficult to get a reform program through Congress.

All in all, the State of the Union message was a disappointment; yet another indication that 1974 will be a tough year for the nation.

#

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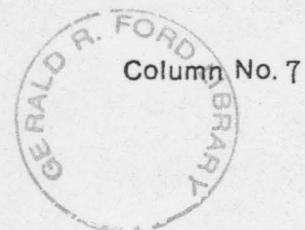


74-TBE-6
2/6/74

To Be Equal

NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE --- I

by
Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.



The Administration's Comprehensive Health Insurance Plan goes a long way toward improving the chaotic mess in American health care, yet it falls short of providing the kind of federally financed, federally administered health system that will assure each and every citizen access to high quality medical attention.

But perhaps more important than the failings of the plan is the fact of its existence. It is much better than the weak proposals offered some years back. And by putting the issue of national health care to the Congress and the country, the Administration has helped move the issue off center. Because of this, it is likely that the nation will finally get some kind of comprehensive national health program this year.

The big question is, what kind of program? Will it be the Administration plan, with all its failings; a weaker version of that plan, or a truly comprehensive all-inclusive health program.

The Administration plan would be financed by employer-employee contributions to private health insurance plans that meet government specifications. Families with health costs would be reimbursed for part of their expenses until they had paid \$1,500 in costs, then the insurance would cover everything over that.

Here are a few of the faults I see in this program:

: Because it operates through insurers rather than through a Social Security-type trust fund, and since it preserves the old fee-for-service medical billing practices, it is bound to result in continued inflation in health costs.

: Because families will have to pay part of their medical costs in addition to contributing to insurance premiums, serious illness could cost a family \$1,500 a year. That may not be a financial disaster for some of the people who think the bill provides protection against catastrophic illness, but its enough to wipe out a working man's savings and bury him in debt. Only about one out of four people would collect

benefits in any given year, because of the high deductibles.

: There are really three plans -- one for working people whose employers contribute too, another for the poor and marginally employed whose premiums are paid by the government, and the elderly, covered by Medicare.

This kind of tracking system, based on income and work situation, can easily lead to abuses with two standards for health care, one for the paying worker, and the other for the poor. A truly comprehensive system would insure the same treatment for all.

: There's nothing in the program to end the doctor shortage, make doctors available to urban and rural poverty belts, encourage doctors to practice family medicine, or to insure consumer participation in health decisions.

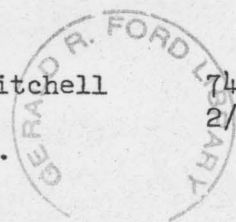
There are other faults in the program too, and I think the basic difficulty is that the plan is designed to leave the basic structure of the medical industry intact and to provide some help in solving the financial problems in paying for high-cost health care.

It's a program that private insurers can back; one that has definite attraction for many families, but one that doesn't deal with the essence of the health problems the country faces.

Despite the Administration's high praise for the present state of American medicine, it is clear that we are nowhere near "number one" in health. In key indicators like infant mortality and life expectancy, the U.S. ranks pretty far down on the list of developed countries. And I fear that the proposed reform won't change that situation to the degree that it could.

The Administration plan, welcome as a big improvement over the present mess, ought to go a lot farther. Next week, I'll outline some of the points a truly adequate national health program ought to include.

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New York, New York 10022
(212) 751-0300 (EXT 260/270)



74-TBE-7
2/13/74



July 22, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION, HEW
 THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT, HUD
 THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, HUD

FROM: LEONARD GARMENT
 ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Proposals from the Washington Urban League

The Executive Director of the Washington Urban League, Mr. Sterling Tucker, has called to my attention a number of proposals in which the Urban League is interested as candidates for federal support. They are:

<u>Proposal</u>	<u>Possible Funding Source</u>
"Future for Billy"	Office of Education
"Training and Employment of Public Housing Residents"	Housing Management, HUD
"American Child - Third Century"	Office of Child Development, HEW

I attach a write-up of each proposal as it pertains to your respective jurisdictions.

In doing so, I would also like to call your attention to the meeting which the President has with Whitney Young and representatives of the National Urban League in December of 1970 in which the President expressed interest in having federal agencies work with outside groups like the Urban League in areas where the League's expertise and credibility make it a valuable collaborator in assisting the Federal Government's own statutory and program objectives.

I would appreciate it if each of you would ask the appropriate staff officers to review these proposals respectively and to get in touch directly with Mr. Tucker at his Urban League office (265-8200) for the purpose of discussing your interests and his in the merits of these suggestions. I would be interested in knowing the outcome of your negotiations.

cc: Mr. Sterling Tucker

✓ bcc: Stan Scott

1974 NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE CONFERENCE
San Francisco, California

JOHN CALHOUN
ITINERARY

** SATURDAY, JULY 27, 1974

11:45 a.m. -- Lv. Friendship Airport TWA #227
2:10 p.m. -- Arr. San Francisco, Calif., (San Fran. Intern'l)

RESERVATIONS: Hyatt Regency
5 Embarcadero Center
San Francisco, Calif. 94111
415/788-1234

SUNDAY, JULY 28, 1974

THEME: "Full Employment As A National Goal"

12:00 p.m. -- LUNCHEON -- Council of Urban League Guilds
Guest Speaker: The Honorable Yvonne Braithwaite Burke

8:00 p.m. -- KEYNOTE ADDRESS -- Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.

MONDAY, JULY 29, 1974

9:00 a.m. -- Plenary Session
"Full Employment: What Does It Mean?"

12:00 p.m. -- LUNCHEON -- General Conference
(The NUL Conference headlines an official of Fed. Gov.)

2:30 p.m. -- Plenary Session
"Strengthening The Black Business Sector"

8:00 p.m. -- Local Host Affair
"Gateway to the Stars"



TUESDAY, JULY 30, 1974

9:00 a.m. -- Plenary Session
"Impact of Health, Education and Social
Welfare Programs on Economic Security"

** RETURN TRIP TO D.C. (Tues. July 30)

12:30 p.m. -- Lv. San Francisco International TWA #222
8:21 p.m. -- Arr. Friendship Airport

WEDNESDAY, JULY 31, 1974

NO APPOINTMENTS



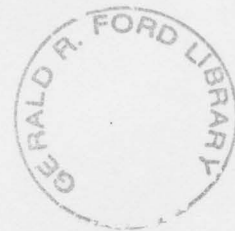
MEMO TO EDITORS

by
Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.

Attached is the complete text of the address Vernon E. Jordan, Jr., delivered before the National Urban League's Annual Conference. Those newspapers who do not wish to interrupt regular publication of the To Be Equal column are invited to use excerpts from this speech in that space during the weeks when Mr. Jordan will be on vacation and the column will not be distributed. A previous memo, released with the column of July 10th advised you that the columns ordinarily mailed on August 21 and August 28 would not be mailed. Regular mailings of the To Be Equal column will resume on September 4.

- 30 -

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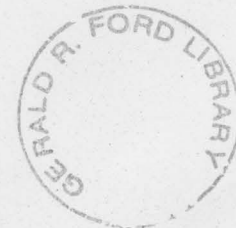


Keynote Address by
VERNON E. JORDAN, Jr.
Executive Director
NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE
at the
64th ANNUAL CONFERENCE
of the
NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE
San Francisco Hilton Hotel
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA
Sunday, July 28th, 1974

A year ago, this Conference convened in Washington, D. C., at the height of the Senate Watergate hearings. Tonight, we gather a continent away, while the Congress is preparing for the institution of impeachment proceedings against the President of the United States.

The long shadow cast by Watergate, therefore, is a measure of the perilous state to which our nation has fallen, and it reflects, as well, a world-wide crisis of leadership that has profound implications for minority Americans.

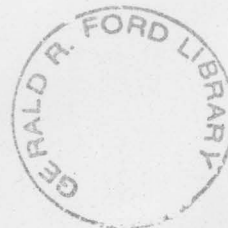
The past year has seen changes in governmental leadership in almost every major European country. It has seen a war that brought the world to the brink of nuclear confrontation. It has seen the shaky construction of a detente between Russia and the



United States at a time when both governments engage in Cold War against their minorities. It has seen an energy crisis, famine and above all, an atmosphere of waning confidence in national leadership groups to cope with the challenges of our time.

This deteriorating international situation is reflected in our domestic situation. Watergate has resulted in a governmental paralysis of the first magnitude, with the President locked into a stonewall position against Congress, the special prosecutor and the courts, and his Administration locked into a stonewall position blocking the hopes and aspirations of America's black, brown, red and yellow minorities. In the twelve months since we last met, prices have sky-rocketed, real wages have fallen, housing production is down and interest rates are up, and five million people are still out of jobs by the government's own, laundered figures. Just last Thursday, the President justified the notion that in an economic crunch, the people already caught between the rock and the hard place will be ground down even more. This nation's shattered economy is being guided on a wing and a prayer and it looks like it's headed for a crash-landing.

And along with this mess we have seen the emergence of the lunacy of domestic terrorism and its counterpart, official hysteria. I think it has to be made very clear that lunacy is not revolution. The lunacy that leads an alienated, lonely outcast to destroy innocent people, like Mama King, in an Atlanta church is not revolutionary. Neither is the lunacy that leads bitter gunslingers to kill at random in the streets of this city. And least revolutionary is that lunacy that leads predominately white psuedo-revolutionaries to kill a fine black educator, Dr. Marcus Foster.



The mirror image of this insanity is the official hysteria that transforms police officers into self-styled Wyatt Earps seeking shoot-outs, and leads the political leadership of this city to unconstitutionally suspend the rights of innocent black men to walk the streets without fear of unlawful seizure and questioning.

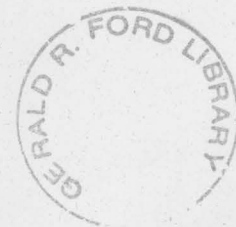
Vicious murders and official overreactions are the twin sides of the coin of a society that is tense and troubled, stumbling along in a leadership vacuum of frightening proportions.

As this nation approaches its 200th anniversary, it would do well to recall Jefferson's wise dictum: "the care of human life and happiness, and not their destruction, is the first and only legitimate object of good government."

Those words have not been heeded by an Administration that has presided over the attempted dismantling of the Second Reconstruction, which was devoted to extending the rights to life and happiness among our poor and minorities. From the President's personal war on busing to his impoundment of social service funds and the unilateral dismantling of social service programs he has made it clear that our national government, once the rock of hope for minorities, is now, at best, indifferent to their needs and aspirations.

There has been a massive failure of moral leadership from the White House, which has encouraged the negative forces in our society.

There has been a failure of moral leadership from state and local governments, as evidenced by their devoting only a token percentage of general revenue sharing funds to social services for the poor and the elderly. This confirms us in our belief that revenue sharing is no "new American revolution" but a new rip-off that takes federal monies that should be used to fight poverty and



gives them to localities for use in cosmetic projects of dubious necessity.

There has been a failure of moral leadership in the Congress, which spends so much of its energy complaining about the powers of the Presidency but so little of its energy framing constructive alternatives to White House policies. The Congress, like some lumbering bear, awakens only long enough to go tearing through the woods in search of school buses to devour, and then crawls back into its lair to fall once more into a stupor of inaction.

And there has been a failure of moral leadership on the part of both major political parties. On both sides of the aisle, there has been a failure to understand that the lack of ethics, the concern for power at all costs, and the cynicism that directly led to Watergate also led to policies directed against the interests of black people and poor people. We have yet to see Republican leadership come forth with the admission that blacks have been "Watergated" by their party's representatives. We have yet to see Republican leadership pledge to revive the bi-partisan consensus that led to the civil rights victories of the 1960s.

And we have yet to see Democratic leadership come forth with positive policies to relieve the pressures on minority citizens and the poor. Instead of fulfilling its historic role of reform, the Democratic Party appears to live in fear of a stricken Administration and it replaces sound policy initiatives with calls for a veto-proof Congress and with fawning upon the symbol of segregation, George Wallace.

There can be no greater indication of the terrible state to which our nation has fallen; no greater indication of the failure



of moral nerve that infects our political leadership groups, than the creeping respectability lately granted to Mr. Wallace.

I have as much sympathy as the next man for the pain and suffering Governor Wallace has gone through. And I can try to understand -- but without much success -- why some black officeholders might feel it expedient to endorse one who has power and benefits to distribute, although that is a matter between the black officeholder, his conscience and his constituents.

But a segregationist in a wheelchair is just as bad as a segregationist standing in front of the schoolhouse door. And it is a betrayal of our past for black people to endorse, or to vote for the man whose words "Segregation today, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever," still ring loud and clear. And for national political leaders to make pilgrimages to Alabama, to lend their prestige to his cause, and to publicly mention him as an acceptable candidate for national office, is something that verges on the obscene.

Let no one forget the degradations and terror black people suffered under his leadership. Let no one forget the bombings of the homes of civil rights leaders in Alabama in the 1960s. Let no one forget the broken bodies of the four little black girls who died in the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham. Let no one forget the black and white civil rights workers who met violent deaths in Alabama -- William Moore, Jonathan Daniels, Jimmie Lee Jackson, James Reeb and Mrs. Viola Liuzzo. All were victims not only of racist terrorism but also of the atmosphere of massive resistance fostered by segregationist leadership.

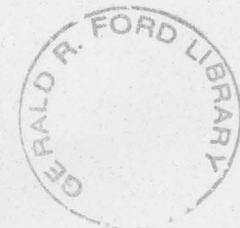


Our nation today suffers from a leadership vacuum that is, as well, a failure of followship. Americans, once lulled into an affluent stupor and now troubled by escalating inflation, consistently place private concerns above public needs. Even among those still committed to extending political, social and economic advances for minorities, there appears to be a slackened commitment.

All too many Americans give lip service to the goals of a more equal society while reserving the intensity of their energies to fighting the methods of making our society more equal and just. People will say they are for school integration, but against busing. They're for better housing for the poor, but not in their neighborhood. They want affirmative action, but are against quotas, a label stuck on any program with numerical goals, guidelines and timetables.

Such positions strike me as the essence of bad faith, hypocritical dodges to avoid the moral commitments they are not prepared to make. Honesty demands that if a person truly believes in integrated schools or in more equal job opportunities, he must support the means to those ends. If he honestly doubts the wisdom of busing or of numerical guidelines in affirmative action programs, then he has the responsibility, if he is honest with himself, to come up with workable alternatives to those methods.

This nation made a commitment in the 1960s, a moral commitment to extend to all its citizens the rights and privileges and power denied to so many for so long. In a sense, "We Shall Overcome" became America's theme song and whites and blacks clasped hands in support of fulfilling our nation's age-old dream of equality. White

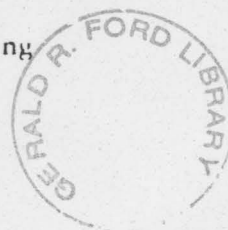


America must now redeem the solemn pledge it made a few short years ago. White America must once again join us in overcoming the barriers of discrimination and racism. There is plenty of room for disagreement on methods, but there is no room for disagreement on goals or on the need to construct viable means of reaching those goals.

On the major issues confronting poor and minority Americans, the silent white majority must find its voice and add its call for justice and progress. For poor and moderate-income people of all colors and races are being ground down by the unequal burdens of inflation, the massive failure of the health system, the institutionalized poverty represented by the welfare system, and the economy's failure to provide jobs for all.

Today's inflation may have caused a little penny-pinching by the better-off, but for the millions of Americans who are poor or near-poor, inflation has meant missed meals, malnourishment and hunger. "Poor people's food" -- rice, beans and margarine -- have climbed fastest and furthest. Poor folk have been eating substitutes all their lives and now that the prices of their staple foods have shot through the roof, the only switch they can make is to stop eating. And while the federal model food budget for cheaper eating rose forty percent in the past few years, real income is down seven percent, and the average working man is now worse off than he was five years ago.

All of this means that hunger is the daily acquaintance of millions of poor people -- at least 15 million whites and 8 million blacks. Hunger stalks families whose food stamps



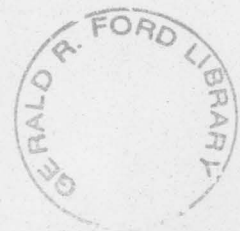
have increased less than food prices. Hunger hits the two out of three people eligible for food stamps who don't get them. Hunger is the disgrace of a nation whose leadership claims it is Number One, but which tolerates empty stomachs and malnourished children.

Hunger is tied to poverty and it is estimated that two out of every five people in this nation were poor at one time or another in the past six years. Poverty is fluid, a constant threat to 80 million people who are now poor or who will find themselves poor if there's another energy crisis, if their job is lost, or if their wife stops working.

It is typical of the callousness of America's failed political leadership that it continues to frame the questions of poverty in the context of blackness and of myths about personal attitudes and lifestyles rather than in the context of the structural weakness of the economy and governmental policies.

A comprehensive approach that insures no one goes hungry and that a decent minimum income floor is placed beneath every family should be a priority item on the American political agenda.

The Administration's promises of welfare reform seem to have gone the way of the missing tapes, simply vanished into thin air. And Congressional leadership which seems to think welfare reform is a scheme to steal away low-priced maids and servants, is now showing its vacillation once more, in its all-too-eager willingness to compromise on a national health insurance program just at the point when it seemed possible that real reform was on the way.

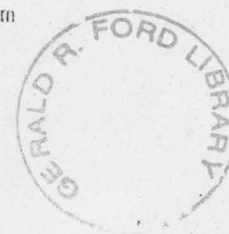


The compromise health insurance proposal now getting liberal support, like the Administration proposal it improves upon, would maintain the present inadequate system of health care. The structure of private insurers, fee-for-service billing and guaranteed profits for the health industry are more apparent concerns than guaranteed quality health care for all. I don't underestimate the importance of tactical compromises in securing reforms that can be expanded upon later. But a patchwork approach to health reform that leaves virtually intact a system that has enriched some while condemning millions to poor health care cannot be justified.

The National Urban League stands fast behind a sweeping reform program that assures consumer participation, expanded federalized medical education, cost controls, a sound federal insurance program and establishment of the basic right of every person, regardless of race, income, age, or geographic location, to high quality comprehensive and dignified medical, dental and mental health care.

There is neither need nor reason to settle for less.

Last year this Conference issued a call for a national full employment policy. Since then, there has been growing support for a federal program of public service employment from a broad spectrum of informed opinion. Because this is the single most crucial issue facing our society today we are devoting this year's Conference to the theme of Full Employment as a National Goal. Success in the battle to achieve guaranteed jobs as a basic human right for all who are capable of work may well decide whether the nation's economy can survive the post-industrial age.



The need for swift action to create jobs in the private sector through expanded training programs and incentives to industry is apparent to all, and is the responsibility of both the public and the private sector.

But less apparent is the need for expansion of the public sector to assure everyone's right to a meaningful job with career opportunities and decent salaries. It is time to declare that massive unemployment as a permanent feature of American life should be ended. It is time to declare that we cannot claim to have reached a high standard of civilization and to enjoy a high quality of national life while public services are starved and essential public needs are unmet.

This is an America whose facade of high consumption and private affluence conceals the reality of poverty and discrimination and the persistent impoverishment of essential public services. A large-scale program of new career opportunities in the public service arena would go a long way toward the building of a humane, efficient society with day care centers, transportation, health clinics, schools, community-based public safety and environmental programs and all of the other amenities of community life that are an indispensable part of creating a civilization of high quality and well-being.

Thus, when we speak of jobs for all we are also talking about increasing the quality of American life, of creating a good society based on human services and equal opportunities for all.

There is an old principle that says if you repeat a lie often enough, people will believe it. For years a lie has circulated and it's served as the basis for public do-nothing policies. That lie said that blacks are rapidly improving their economic position and

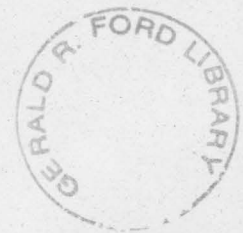


that we are becoming a predominately middle class group. Now the media have picked that up and have placed their stamp of approval on it, so it is believed by millions of people and serves as a further excuse for abandoning the social and economic programs of the Second Reconstruction.

The fact is that black people are not middle class by any definition of the term -- absolute income, relative income or occupational status. The bulk of black people are in marginal economic circumstances. One of every three blacks is poor and four out of every five black families have incomes below the government's own "intermediate" -- or middle class -- living standard.

And the best kept secret in these United States is that, relative to whites, black people are falling behind; the gap is actually growing. The gains of recent years have been all but wiped out and black people are in the same relative income position we were in five years ago. Last year the typical white American family had an income of \$12,600. The typical black family had an income of \$7,200. This means that about \$5,400 separates the typical black and white families -- over \$100 per week -- but the gap has actually widened by about \$600 in the past year! And this also means that the typical black family earns about \$1,000 less than the government's own estimate of a "lower, non-poverty" living standard.

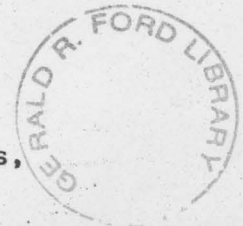
So the grim, brutal reality for black people in 1974 is not middle class status, but deprivation and marginal existence in the midst of affluence.



Given this, what we must recognize is that the issues we've discussed tonight transcend race. Black and white people are hurting. So white Americans should now join those of us in the human rights movement in alliances based on mutual interests and mutual respect. The Jewish community, so long a firm ally and again concerned about the worldwide disease of anti-Semitism, should renew the vigor of its commitment to the civil rights movement and join with us to extend our historic alliance. The institutional pillars of our society -- the church, the university, labor, business, foundations and other sectors should join us in creative coalitions to ensure the stability of our nation and the maintenance of our democratic aspirations.

Other minorities whose experiences of discrimination and injustice have resembled ours -- Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Native Americans and Asian-Americans -- should also join hands with the civil rights movement. This nation's dispossessed minorities have been egged on to fight each other for the pitiful scraps and leftovers of this economy. It is now time for us to come together in active coalitions that draw upon the power of our unified efforts and the righteousness of our shared goal of freedom and equality.

And just as other groups must forge a common bond to struggle for a better society, so must black folk get ourselves together. The black community has been the cutting edge for social change in our nation and if we are to continue to fulfill our responsibilities, if we are to overcome the setbacks of recent years and achieve a new



plateau of progress, then we will have to exercise the wisdom, the fortitude and the leadership to help unite the black community.

A major factor in this effort should be black leadership equipping itself for the struggles of the coming years with the degree of cooperation and consultation that marked the leadership of the 1960s. Many of the successes black people won in that decade can be traced to the frequency with which civil rights leadership met and to the complementary functions performed by the various organizations.

It is time for that level of cooperation to be reached again. There is need for black leadership to maintain a continuing relationship that might take the form of regular meetings to deal with specific issues and specific strategies in a comprehensive detailed way. I'm not talking about black summitry under the glare of television lights and press conferences. I'm not talking about endorsing political candidates or parties. I'm not talking about a competitive atmosphere of preaching at each other and jockeying for a headline. And I'm not talking about just another meeting.

I am talking about getting ourselves together to deal with the highly complex issues that affect black people in the 1970s.

Black leadership cannot afford to overlook any means of strengthening our purpose and unifying our cause. In a way, the leadership of the 1960s had a simpler task; it dealt with basic rights and issues on which there was a national consensus, national goodwill, and above all, committed national political leadership.

But the issues facing us today are full employment, national health insurance, inflation, the economy, metro government, income maintenance plans -- issues of tremendous complexity that can't be dealt with by a blast of rhetoric or a march on the county courthouse.



These issues are of a nature that demand from us greater understanding on the available options, information about their true nature and their effect on black people, discussion of strategies to reach agreed-upon goals, and decisions, hard decisions about how best to use the resources we have and how we can share our strengths and minimize our weaknesses.

I believe that the construction of a framework for black leadership to convene regularly to inform itself and to plan strategies around the great issues of our day is essential if black folk are not to be left at the starting gate of the changed society that is emerging around us.

We must recognize that black leadership has changed. The leadership of the black community is no longer solely embodied in the national community-based civil rights groups but now includes a new leadership class that has emerged from the marches to win voting rights, from the voter registration drives and from the political expression of the will of black people -- and that is the black elected official.

On the many issues and aspirations of our constituents our basic interests converge; more unites us than divides us. And on our solemn responsibility toward our constituents, we are in harmony. Finally, black leadership would be failing black people who look toward it for achievement, if we do not get ourselves together and work constructively for their good.

Above all, we owe it to those millions upon millions of black people out there who are under the hammer.

Black people are under the hammer of bad health, bad housing, and bad jobs or no jobs.



Black people, twenty years after the Brown decision, are under the hammer of segregated schools.

Black people are under the hammer of hunger.

Black people are under the hammer of discrimination, of denial, and of Depression.

Black people are under the hammer of official cynicism and indifference.

Black people are crying out, from the crevices of this land, to take that hammer of injustice off our heads, to take the hammer of poverty off our backs, to take the hammer of deprivation off our chests.

Black folk want the hammer in their hands. Like the old Pete Seeger song, they sing:

"If I had a hammer, I'd hammer in the morning,
I'd hammer in the evening, All over this land;
I'd hammer at danger, I'd hammer out a warning,
I'd hammer out love between my brothers and my sisters,
All over this land...."

The President has a hammer, but he's using it to save himself and not to save the people.

The Congress has a hammer, but is using it to beat on busing to stay in office and not using it to save the children.

The Supreme Court has a hammer, but it's using it to try to take us back to the separate-but-equal doctrine, instead of using it to move us forward to an integrated society.



Middle America has a hammer in its affluence and numerical power, but it uses it to satisfy private wants, not public needs.

So black people truly sing "If I had a hammer," for we had a hammer in the civil rights movement of the 1960s and we hammered out a movement of mutual respect and social and economic progress.

With the hammer in our hands black people can rise above the selfishness and suspicion of these United States in this tortured year of 1974 and help to create a better nation, more just, more humane, more free.

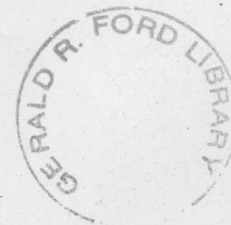
Yes, black people want the hammer of freedom, the hammer of justice, the hammer of decency; for with that hammer we can build wonders. We can hammer out love and peace, justice and fairness... all over this great land of ours.

And to that end, the Urban League is still on the case. We're on the case in our 102 cities. Black folk know that no matter how difficult the obstacles, no matter how hard or crooked the road, no matter how discouraging it may get at times, "we ain't no ways tired."

The Urban League movement's got its hands on the plow and we are not turning back. We "ain't gonna let nobody turn us 'round." We stand firm and tall, with our roots deep in the black community and our eyes lifted upward toward a better day. And we do believe in a better day.

We do believe in better times. We do have faith in our just and righteous struggle. We do believe, with Thomas Wolfe, who wrote:

"I believe that we are lost here in America, but I believe we shall be found.... I think the true discovery of America is before us. I think the true fulfillment of our spirit, of our people, of our mighty and immortal land,



is yet to come. I think the true discovery of our democracy is still before us and I think that all these things are certain as the morning, as inevitable as noon. I think I speak for most men living when I say that our America is Here, is Now, and beckons on before us, and that this glorious assurance is not only our living hope, but our dream to be accomplished."

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