## REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITY DAY DINNER

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Hyatt Regency Hotel Atlanta, Georgia

December 5, 1974

It is an honor to be with you tonight and to receive your Equal Opportunity Award for 1974.

I know that Mayor Jackson, former Mayor Allen, Ralph Abernathy, Benjamin Mays, and a number of other outstanding leaders were prior recipients. It is a privilege to join their ranks.

To be honored by the Urban League also is special for me. I have known and worked with you, your organization, and your leaders for a generation. It has been one of the privileges of my political life to have had the chance to be associated with such dedicated people.

I count among the blessings of a public career the friendship of such leaders as Martin Luther King, Jr., Whitney Young, Vernon Jordan, Roy Wilkins, and Clarence Mitchell. But I have been equally honored by the opportunity to work with the legions of "unknown soldiers" who have made progress possible. These are the people, many of whom have worked tirelessly and effectively for decades, who will make the dreams we share become realities for all Americans.

We have made great progress in our effort to promote human rights and fulfill our democratic ideals. We all can take some pride in having "beaten the odds" and moved ahead as far as we have.

But, the danger is that many will become confident and relax when they see how far we have traveled, rather than draw strength from these accomplishments and push on. This nation cannot afford to lessen its resolve to root out prejudice and discrimination wherever they exist.

At a time when the American people have become skeptical about the integrity and commitment of their government to meet the needs of the people, we must redouble our efforts to insure full equality of opportunity and treatment. We can do no less.

I do not accept the proposition that most Americans believe that two centuries of racial injustice have somehow vanished from this land.

All of us here today have a heavy responsibility to remind our fellow citizens of an unfinished agenda of human rights that still confronts this nation.

The struggle to eradicate these living denials of justice and freedom continues. We must face directly the kind of tough political problems that we faced many years ago.

The struggle in Congress on civil rights legislation has never been easy. In many respects, our present difficulties are no more insuperable than the barriers we faced in the "good old days." They are different, to be sure, but not insurmountable. We must continue the progress of the 1960's. But in order to do so, we must devise a new political strategy to achieve our goals in this decade of the 70's.

I begin with this proposition: unless we can agree on a strategy that will attract a majority coalition in the Congress and the Nation at large, we can look forward to little in the way of concrete results.

As I see it, we must identify the struggle for civil rights as an all-embracing struggle for the rights and privileges and duties of all Americans.

In the political arena, there are not enough blacks, there are not enough Chicanos and Indians and Puerto Ricans to form an electoral majority.

So we must create a climate of identity of interests between the needs, the hopes, and the fears of the minorities and the needs and the hopes and fears of the majority.

In simple language this means, for example, identifying the cause of civil rights with giving every child the chance to obtain the best possible education. Millions of parents, white and black, feel that the present educational system is not satisfying the needs of their children.

We must identify civil rights with the right of every American to good health care.

It is not only blacks or Chicanos that have inadequate health care. There are millions of Americans, white as well as black or brown or red, who are either victims of inadequate health care or unable to pay for what care is available.

We must find some new, common denominators, mutual needs, mutual wants, common hopes and fears, and use them to bind together a coalition of people representing the hopes and the needs of the majority.

Out of this coalition we can then fashion a new Bill of Rights that will belong to all Americans and, because it does, it will have tremendous force:

-- The right to a meaningful life, free from poverty.

-- The right to the full and equal protection of the law.

-- The right to decent employment.

-- The right to an equal opportunity for economic, political, and social advancement.

-- The right to be free from hunger.

-- The right to privacy, free from official or private invasion.

-- The right to a good education at all levels for all our children.

-- The right to good health and a comprehensive system of national health insurance.

-- The right to a decent home in a wholesome environment.

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These rights belong to the American people; they are not just for blacks or Chicanos or Indians, but for the blue-collar worker, the poor white, the student, the farmer, the worker in the office or the shop. Without these rights alive and well and vital, without these rights applicable and accepted, there are no real civil rights.

We now have the formalities of law, the legal protection, but we have not had the social acceptance that is required.

The new dimensions of civil rights are to be found in the living and working conditions of our people. And we are just beginning this more difficult struggle to change men's hearts and not simply men's minds.

Today, the battlefield for equal opportunity has shifted from the courts to the marketplace. The recession-inducing policies of the current Administration threaten to erase the progress made over the last two decades toward economic justice.

In periods of economic growth, with income, jobs, and business opportunities expanding, it is much easier to increase participation on the part of those who have found the gates of access closed to them in the past, than during a period of economic decline.

The policy of "last hired -- first fired" is applied without hesitation in times of economic trouble.

Moreover, minority businessmen today are going broke because they can't compete with more established firms for scarce capital and raw materials.

Minority workers find that they are most vulnerable to lay-offs as the tradtional seniority rules are applied.

Minority graduate students, being prepared to provide the critical professional leadership needed in the fields of engineering, education, law, architecture, medicine, social work and journalism, are forced to put off their training as recession dries up the sources of assistance to these students.

We all know the terribly discriminatory impact of inflation and recession on the economically weak and unorganized. To be poor, or black, or elderly in America today means great deprivation and suffering.

We cannot continue to avoid our responsibility to help these people meet the current crisis.

We cannot condone and passively accept policies that blatantly cut back on the food stamp, medicare, and other people programs so desperately needed.

However, we must also act to prevent the destruction of the momentum toward economic justice that has been building up over the last two decades. This is the staggering cost of a policy that purposely creates recession in order to bring down inflation. And, it is a cost that has been given totally inadequate attention by the Ford Administration.

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To protect those individuals already suffering from our economic woes, we must restore economic growth and begin to reduce inflation. One thing is clear: The "old-time religion" of across-the-board tight money policy has failed dismally. A new policy is urgently needed.

I want to outline a few of the critically important features of this new economic policy.

First, we must enact a program of tax relief to low and middle income Americans, offset by closing some of the most glaring tax loopholes.

Second, we must launch a genuine Full Employment Program that will effectively guarantee a job at decent wages to every American who is able and willing to work.

This means the government will become the employer of last resort. Some will claim this is too expensive. But how much more expensive is it to have 6 or 7 million Americans unemployed and many additional millions of people seriously underemployed?

Third, an all-out effort to meet the neglected needs of our cities must be mounted.

Many of our cities are aging, their resources terribly under-utilized. Unless they get a major capital transfusion, their continued viability is in doubt.

The time has come to enact my National Domestic Development Bank proposal and provide long-term, low-interest loans to stimulate local economic development.

Fourth, the housing sector must be revived by a general loosening of the monetary reins and the release of still-impounded housing funds. Nothing can be more inflationary in the long run, and recessionary and destructive in the short run, than the current policy of induced "depression" in this key industry.

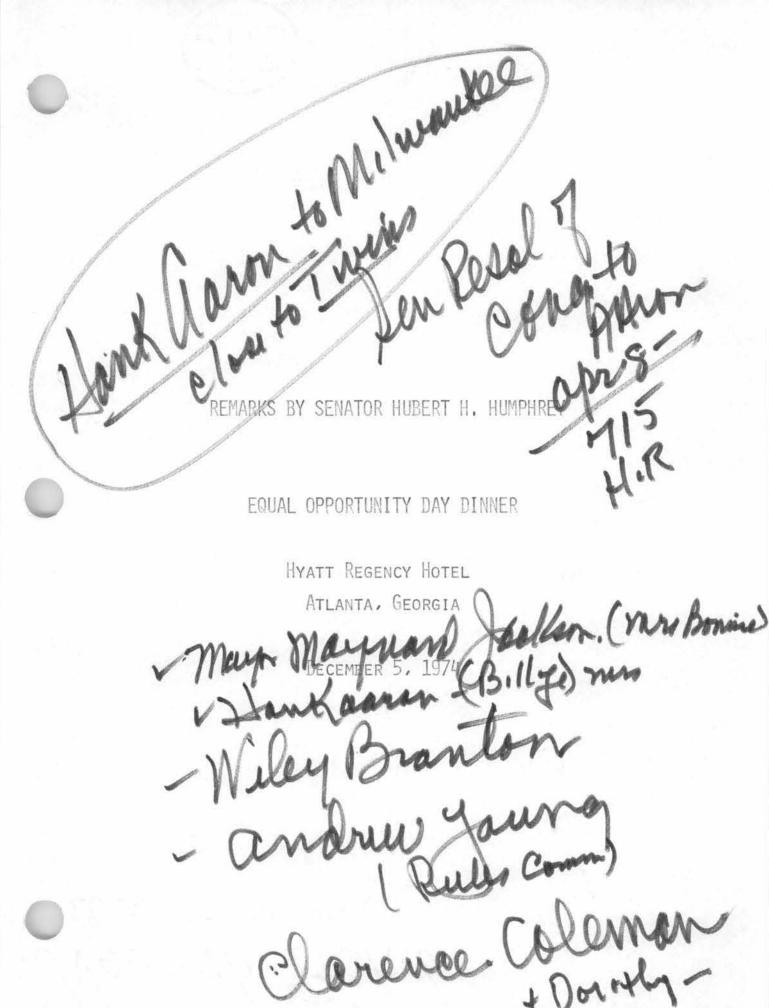
Fifth, a comprehensive program must be devised to preserve economic gains made by minorities in the past two decades. This is an urgent requirement.

It must include an "energized" program of "survival" loans to minority business. It must include an imaginative proposal for assuring that equal opportunity gains of minority workers are not destroyed in the recession. And, it must provide expanded support for minority educational institutions and students at a time when traditional sources of support are stretched to the breaking point.

Continued progress toward equal opportunity and equal treatment for all Americans is possible in the months and years ahead if this effort is made. But the threat to progress is great and growing as economic decline accelerates.

We must redouble our efforts to sustain the momentum for equal opportunity and justice. If we fail to do so, our dreams for reaching the "promised land," so eloquently described by your martyred native son, will be greeted by growing cynicism by a new generation of frustrated and angered young Americans.

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LIT IS AN HONOR TO BE WITH YOU TONIGHT AND TO RECEIVE YOUR EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AWARD FOR 1974.

I KNOW THAT MAYOR JACKSON, FORMER MAYOR ALLEN, RALPH ABERNATHY, BENJAMIN MAYS, AND A NUMBER OF OTHER OUTSTANDING LEADERS WERE PRIOR RECIPIENTS. IT IS A PRIVILEGE TO JOIN THEIR RANKS.

To be honored by the URBAN LEAGUE ALSO IS SPECIAL FOR ME I HAVE KNOWN AND WORKED WITH YOU, YOUR ORGANIZATION, AND YOUR LEADERS FOR A GENERATION. IT HAS BEEN ONE OF THE

PRIVILEGES OF MY POLITICAL LIFE TO HAVE HAD THE CHANCE TO BE

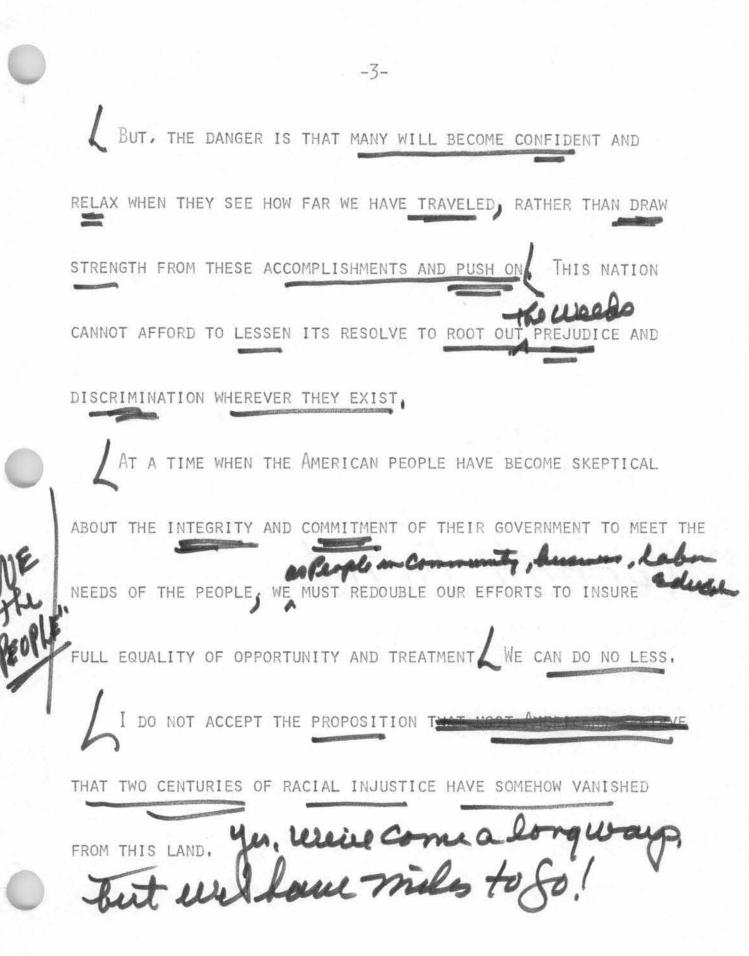
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ASSOCIATED WITH SUCH DEDICATED PEOPLE

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I COUNT AMONG THE BLESSINGS OF A PUBLIC CAREER THE FRIENDSHIP OF SUCH LEADERS AS MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. Young, VERNON JORDAN, ROY WILKINS, AND CLAR BUT I HAVE BEEN EQUALLY HONORED BY THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH THE LEGIONS OF "UNKNOWN SOLDIERS" WHO HAVE MADE PROGRESS POSSIBLE. THESE ARE THE PEOPLE, MANY OF WHOM HAVE WORKED TIRELESSLY AND EFFECTIVELY FOR DECADES, WHO WILL MAKE THE DREAMS WE SHARE BECOME REALITIES FOR ALL AMERICANS, WE HAVE MADE TPROGRESS IN OUR EFFORT TO PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS AND FULFILL OUR DEMOCRATIC IDEALS . WE ALL CAN TAKE SOME PRIDE IN HAVING "BEATEN THE ODDS" AND MOVED AHEAD AS FAR AS WE HAVE,

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-4-ALL OF US HERE TODAY HAVE A HEAVY RESPONSIBILITY TO REMIND OUR FELLOW CITIZENS OF AN UNFINISHED AGENDA OF HUMAN RIGHTS THAT STILL CONFRONTS THIS NATION THE STRUGGLE TO ERADICATE THESE LIVING DENIALS OF JUSTICE AND FREEDOM CONTINUES WE MUST FACE DIRECTLY THE KIND OF TOUGH POLITICAL PROBLEMS THAT WE FACED MANY YEARS AGO. THE STRUGGLE IN CONGRESS ON CIVIL RIGHTS LEGISLATION HAS NEVER OUR PRESENT DIFFICULTIES ARE NO MORE INSUPERABLE THAN THE BARRIERS WE FACED IN THE "GOOD OLD DAYS." THEY ARE DIFFERENT, TO BE SURE, BUT NOT INSURMOUNTABLE. We must continue the progress of the 1960's, But in ORDER TO DO SO, WE MUST DEVISE A NEW POLITICAL STRATEGY TO ACHIEVE OUR GOALS IN THIS DECADES OF THE 70'S

-5-I BEGIN WITH THIS PROPOSITION, UNLESS WE CAN AGREE ON A STRATEGY THAT WILL ATTRACT A MAJORITY COALITION IN THE CONGRESS AND THE NATION AT LARGE, WE CAN LOOK FORWARD TO LITTLE IN THE WAY OF CONCRETE RESULTS As I see it, we must identify the struggle for civil RIGHTS AS AN ALL-EMBRACING STRUGGLE FOR THE RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES AND DUTIES OF ALL AMERICANS. We must allies + IN THE POLITICAL ARENA, THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH BLACKS, THERE HOT ENCLOH CHICANOS AND INDIANS AND PUERTO RICANS TO FORM AN ELECTORAL MAJORITY. So we must create a climate of identity of interests BETWEEN THE NEEDS, THE HOPES, AND THE FEARS OF THE MINORITIES AND THE NEEDS AND THE HOPES AND FEARS OF THE MAJORITY.

IN SIMPLE LANGUAGE THIS MEANS, FOR EXAMPLE, IDENTIFYING THE CAUSE OF CIVIL RIGHTS WITH GIVING EVERY CHILD THE CHANCE TO OBTAIN THE BEST POSSIBLE EDUCATION. MILLIONS OF PARENTS, WHITE AND BLACK, FEEL THAT THE PRESENT EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IS NOT SATISFYING THE NEEDS OF THEIR CHILDREN. WE MUST IDENTIFY CIVIL RIGHTS WITH THE RIGHT OF EVERY AMERICAN TO GOOD HEALTH CARE. LIT IS NOT ONLY BLACKS OR CHICANOS THAT HAVE INADEQUATE HEALTH CARE & THERE ARE MILLIONS OF AMERICANS, WHITE AS WELL AS BLACK OR BROWN OR RED, WHO ARE EITHER VICTIMS OF INADEQUATE HEALTH CARE OR UNABLE TO PAY FOR WHAT CARE IS AVAILABLE.

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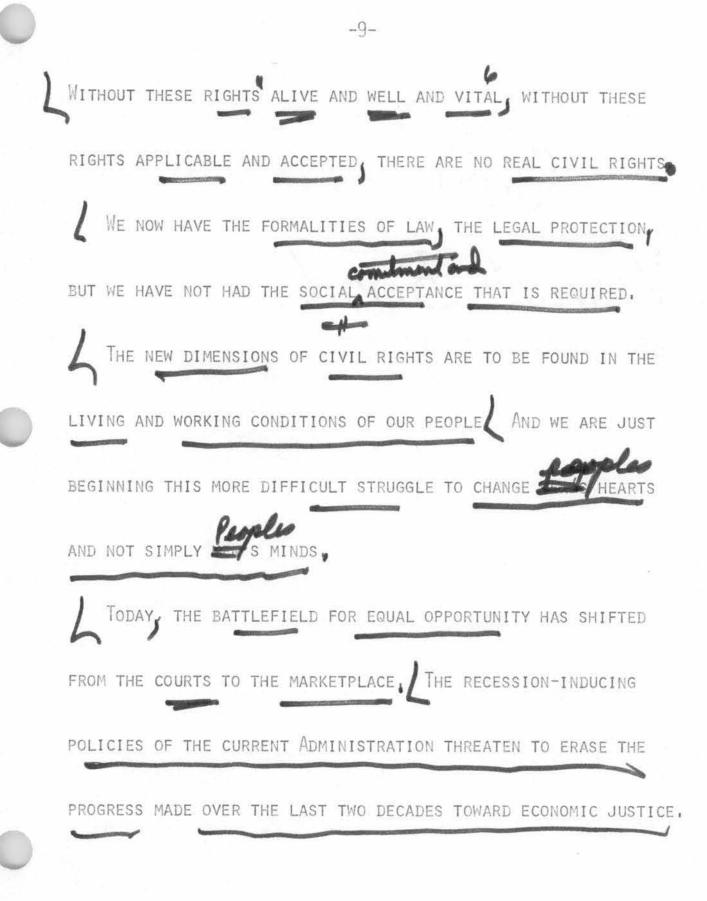
We must find some new, common denominators, mutual needs, MUTUAL WANTS, COMMON HOPES AND FEARS, AND USE THEM TO BIND TOGETHER A COALITION OF PEOPLE REPRESENTING THE HOPES AND THE NEEDS OF THE MAJORITY,

**V** OUT OF THIS COALITION WE CAN THEN FASHION A NEW BILL OF RIGHTS THAT WILL BELONG TO ALL AMERICANS AND, BECAUSE IT DOES, IT WILL HAVE TREMENDOUS FORCE:

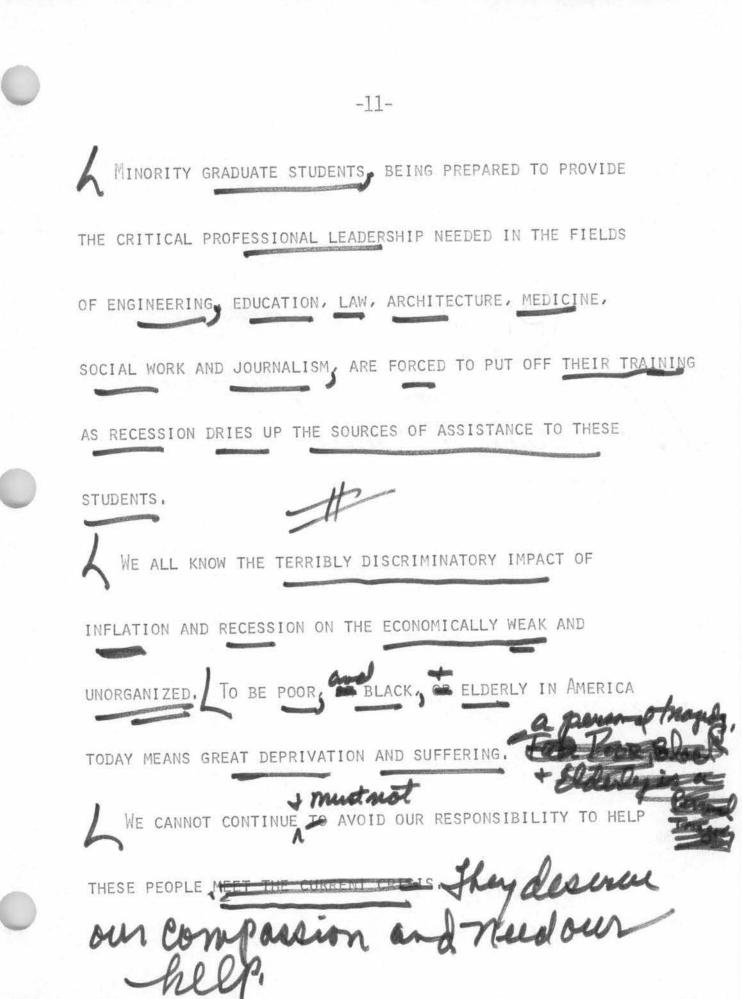
4- THE RIGHT TO A MEANINGFUL LIFE, FREE FROM POVERTY.
4- THE RIGHT TO THE FULL AND EQUAL PROTECTION OF THE LAW.
4- THE RIGHT TO DECENT EMPLOYMENT - 54
- THE RIGHT TO AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR ECONOMIC, POLITICAL,

AND SOCIAL ADVANCEMENT.

-8-THE RIGHT TO BE FREE FROM HUNGER. THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY, FREE FROM OFFICIAL OR PRIVATE INVASION, L THE RIGHT TO A GOOD EDUCATION AT ALL LEVELS FOR ALL OUR CHILDREN. - THE RIGHT TO GOOD HEALTH AND A COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE. -- THE RIGHT TO A DECENT HOME IN A WHOLESOME ENVIRONMENT. These rights belong to the American people; they are not JUST FOR BLACKS OR CHICANOS OR INDIANS, BUT FOR THE BLUE-COLLAR WORKER, THE POOR WHITE, THE STUDENT, THE FARMER, THE WORKER IN THE OFFICE OR THE SHOP.



IN PERIODS OF ECONOMIC GROWTH, WITH INCOME, JOBS, AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES EXPANDING, IT IS MUCH EASIER TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION ON THE PART OF THOSE WHO HAVE FOUND THE GATES OF ACCESS CLOSED TO THEM IN THE PAST, THAN DURING A PERIOD OF ECONOMIC DECLINE THE POLICY OF "LAST HIRED -- FIRST FIRED" IS APPLIED WITHOUT HESITATION IN TIMES OF ECONOMIC TROUBLE. MOREOVER, MINORITY BUSINESSMEN TODAY ARE GOING BROKE BECAUSE THEY CAN'T COMPETE WITH MORE ESTABLISHED FIRMS FOR SCARCE CAPITAL AND RAW MATERIALS. MINORITY WORKERS FIND THAT THEY ARE MOST VULNERABLE TO LAY-OFFS AS THE TRADITIONAL SENIORITY RULES ARE APPLIED.



Hopenny wise b! (abla) ' We can PASSIVELY ACCEPT POLICIES THAT WE BLATANTLY CUT BACK ON THE FOOD STAMP, MEDICARE PLE PROGRAMS SO DESPERATELY NEEDED HOWEVER, WE MUST ALSO ACT TO PREVENT THE THE MOMENTUM TOWARD ECONOMIC JUSTICE HE LAST TWO DECADES GERING COST POLICY THAT PURPOSELY CREATES RECESSION IN ORDER TO BRING DOWN DATHISTRATION. PROTECT THOSE INDIVIDUALS ALREADY SUFFERING FROM OUR ECONOMIC WOES, WE MUST RESTORE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND RUSS THE-BOARD TIGHT MONEY PO APLED LS UPGENTLY NEE

I WANT TO OUTLINE A FEW OF THE CRITICALLY IMPORTANT

FEATURES OF THIS NEW ECONOMIC POLICY.

FIRST, WE MUST ENACT A PROGRAM OF TAX RELIEF TO LOW AND MIDDLE INCOME AMERICANS, OFFSET BY CLOSING SOME OF THE MOST GLARING TAX LOOPHOLES Second, we must launch a genuine Full Employment Program THAT WILL EFFECTIVELY GUARANTEE A JOB AT DECENT WAGES TO EVERY AMERICAN WHO IS ABLE AND WILLING TO WORK. This means the government will become the employer of LAST RESORT. Some WILL CLAIM THIS IS TOO EXPENSIVE BUT HOW MUCH MORE EXPENSIVE IS IT TO HAVE 6 OR 7 MILLION AMERICANS UNEMPLOYED AND MANY ADDITIONAL MILLIONS OF PEOPLE SERIOUSLY REMPLOYED

-14-THIRD, AN ALL-OUT EFFORT TO MEET THE NEGLECTED NEEDS OF (3) OUR CITIES MUST BE MOUNTED. - When the Monster Lever Lagency -UNDER-UTILIZED, UNLESS THEY GET A MAJOR CAPITAL TRANSFUSION. THEIR CONTINUED VIABILITY IS IN DOUBT, THE TIME HAS COME TO ENACT MY NATIONAL DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENT BANK PROPOSAL AND PROVIDE LONG-TERM, LOW-INTEREST LOANS TO STIMULATE LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. FOURTH, THE HOUSING SECTOR MUST BE REVIVED BY A GENERAL LOOSENING OF THE MONETARY REINS AND THE RELEASE OF STILL-IMPOUNDED HOUSING FUNDS. NOTHING CAN BE MORE INFLATIONARY IN THE LONG RUN, AND RECESSIONARY AND DESTRUCTIVE IN THE SHORT RUN, THAN THE CURRENT POLICY OF INDUCED "DEPRESSION" IN THIS KEY INDUSTRY.

-15-FIFTH, A COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM MUST BE DEVISED TO PRESERVE ECONOMIC GAINS MADE BY MINORITIES IN THE PAST TWO DECADES, THIS IS AN URGENT REQUIREMENT. IT MUST INCLUDE AN "ENERGIZED" PROGRAM OF "SURVIVAL" LOANS TO MINORITY BUSINESS. IT MUST INCLUDE AN IMAGINATIVE PROPOSAL FOR ASSURING THAT EQUAL OPPORTUNITY GAINS OF MINORITY WORKERS ARE NOT DESTROYED IN THE RECESSION. AND, IT MUST PROVIDE EXPANDED SUPPORT FOR MINORITY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND STUDENTS AT A TIME WHEN TRADITIONAL SOURCES OF SUPPORT ARE STRETCHED TO THE BREAKING POINT. reto Try - 2 periment -

a sho ben america need 10K Celler PROGRESS TOWARD EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND EQUAL LONT TREATMENT FOR ALL AMERICANS IS POSSIBLE IN THE MONTHS AND YEARS AHEAD IF THIS EFFORT IS MADE. BUT THE THREAT IS GREAT AND GROWING AS ECONO WE MUST REDOUBLE OUR EFFORTS TO SUSTAIN THE MOMENTUM FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND JUSTICE. IF WE FAIL TO DO SO, OUR DREAMS FOR REACHING THE "PROMISED LAND," SO ELOQUENTLY DESCRIBED BY YOUR MARTYRED NATIVE SON, WILL BE GREETED BY GROWING CYNICISM BY A NEW GENERATION OF FRUSTRATED AND ANGERED YOUNG AMERICANS

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