The original documents are located in Box D24, folder “Illinois State Medical Society Regional Public Affairs Meeting, Rock Island, IL, April 24, 1968” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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I. THE UNITED STATES HAS FOR LONG BEEN A NATION IN CRISIS... FOR MUCH TOO LONG.

II. AS MEDICAL MEN KNOW, CRISIS RESULTS IN CERTAIN INSTANCES AFTER PERIODS OF INTENSE PAIN AND DISORDER. DOCTORS ALSO TELL US THAT AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION IS WORTH A POUND OF CURE.

III. THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE EXPERIENCING THREE MAJOR CRISIS IN NATIONAL AFFAIRS... THE CRISIS OF CIVIL DISORDER AND CRIME, THE CRISIS OF VIETNAM, AND THE CRISIS OF THE DOLLAR. IT IS USELESS TO TALK ABOUT PREVENTION IN CONNECTION WITH ANY OF THESE EXCEPT AS IT APPLIES TO FUTURE DISORDERS, FUTURE VIETNAMS AND FUTURE DOLLARS.

IV. EVERY CRISIS HAS ITS TURNING POINT. AMERICA CAME TO A TURNING POINT IN VIETNAM, AND PRESIDENT JOHNSON TOOK THE RIGHT ROAD... THAT OF A LIMITED BOMBING HALT, PROJECTED DE-ESCALATION OF THE U.S. MILITARY ROLE IN VIETNAM, AND MOVES TO GET PEACE TALKS STARTED. IT IS UNFORTUNATE THAT NOW THERE IS SO MUCH SQUABBLING OVER THE SITE FOR INITIAL PEACE TALKS.

V. WE HAVE COME TO A TURNING POINT, TOO, IN TERMS OF THE CIVIL DISORDERS THAT ARE TEARING AMERICA APART. WE MUST HEAL OUR DIVISIONS AND MAKE AMERICA WHOLE AGAIN.
A. WE NOW HAVE Come TO A CROSSROADS ON THE RACE PROBLEM IN AMERICA. IT IS
A TIME WHEN EVERY AMERICAN SHOULD PONDER THOSE MOST
IMPORTANT WORDS IN THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, WHICH READ: "WE HOLD THESE
TRUTHS TO BE SELF-EVIDENT, THAT ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL, THAT THEY ARE ENJOINED
BY THEIR CREATOR WITH CERTAIN INALIENABLE RIGHTS, THAT AMONG THESE ARE LIFE,
LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS."

B. WE KNOW THAT NO MAN IS A CARBON COPY OF ANOTHER... THAT EACH IS BORN WITH
SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS AND VARIOUS AMOUNTS OF NATIVE INTELLIGENCE AND INTO
DIFFERENT ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES. THE AUTHORS OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE
WERE TALKING ABOUT INHERENT EQUALITY. THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT HUMAN DIGNITY. THEY
WERE TALKING ABOUT EQUALITY BEFORE THE LAW, AND RESPECT OF ONE HUMAN BEING FOR
ANOTHER. IF AMERICANS BELIEVE IN THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, IT
SHOULD NOT BE NECESSARY FOR ANY AMERICAN... REGARDLESS OF THE COLOR OF HIS SKIN...
TO GO ABOUT WITH A SIGN AROUND HIS NECK, PROCLAIMING 'I AM A MAN.'

C. THIS, BASICALLY, IS WHAT THE CIVIL DISORDERS WE NOW ARE EXPERIENCING ARE
ALL ABOUT. EVERY MAN HAS TO FEEL THAT HE COUNTS FOR SOMETHING OR HE WILL
LASH OUT AT OTHERS. AND NO MAN WILL EVER BE SAFE IN A SOCIETY WHICH NEEDS
HOSTILITY AND HATRED.

D. IT CAN BE SAID THAT THE ASSASSINATION OF MARTIN LUTHER KING WAS JUST AN EXCUSE FOR THE ARSON AND LOOTING THAT FOLLOWED. BUT IT WOULD BE MORE ACCURATE TO SAY IT WAS THE TRIGGER THAT TOUCHED IT OFF. AND IT MAKES STILL MORE SENSE TO SAY THAT THE ARSON AND THE LOOTING ARE SYMPTOMS OF A DISEASE WHICH IS PLAGUING AMERICA...THE DISEASE OF INEQUALITY AND HOSTILITY BETWEEN THE RACES.

E. JUST AS AMERICA COULD NOT LIVE HALF SLAVE AND HALF FREE...SO AMERICA CANNOT LIVE WITH BLACKS HATING WHITES AND WHITES HATING BLACKS. THERE IS GREAT NEED FOR AN ERA OF RECONCILIATION AND AN ERA OF RECONSTRUCTION, NOT ONLY IN TERMS OF REBUILDING OUR CITIES BUT IN TERMS OF REBUILDING PEOPLE. WHITES CANNOT JUST FLEE TO THE SUBURBS AND THINK THEY ARE SHUTTING THE DOOR ON THE RACE PROBLEM. IT SIMPLY WON'T WORK. THE PROBLEM WON'T GO AWAY. THE SUBURBS ARE LARGELY BEDROOM COMMUNITIES. MOST AMERICANS EARN THEIR LIVING IN THE CITIES. IF THE CITIES DIE, ALL AMERICANS WILL BE AFFECTED. TO MAKE THE CITIES HEALTHY, WE HAVE TO HEAL THE
REAL SICKNESS OF THE CITIES...THE SICKNESS OF DEPRIVATION BROUGHT ON BY THE
NEGLECT OF A CENTURY, THE GAP OF GENERATIONS...THE NEED FOR BETTER
SCHOOLING, RURAL TRAINING, JOBS AND HOUSING FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE CENTRAL
CITIES...MUST BE BRIDGED AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE.

VI. How Do We Heal the Sickness of the Cities...By Pouring More Government
Billions into Such Programs as Urban Renewal, Which Displaces Many More People
Than It Houses?

A. The Old Programs Have Not Worked, Yet the Federal Planners Would Pour

THE SAME KIND OF RUB - JUST FILL IT UP A LITTLE MORE
MORE BILLIONS INTO THE sce a RAPID THE POT-POTION, THE MEDICINE
WOULD BE THE SAME, AND IT JUST ISN'T WORKING.

B. I Believe The Only Way the Problems of the Cities Will Be Solved...And
The Sickness of the Cities Healed...Is for Government to Employ The Kind of
Creativity Found in Business and Industry...To Employ This Creativity by Harnessing
It for the Public Good...To Provide the Deprived with Decent Jobs and Housing.

C. That Can Be Done by Offering Industry Tax Incentives to Become an On-The-Job
Trainer for the Hardcore Unemployed and the Underemployed, a Builder of New Plant
AND LOW-COST HOUSING IN THE CENTRAL CITIES AND IN RURAL POVERTY AREAS, AN
EMPLOYER WHO OFFERS HOPE FOR LIVES OF DIGNITY AND DECENCY TO HUMAN BEINGS NOW
OR BELOW IT.
ON THE BORDERLINE, AS THE KERNER COMMISSION HAS POINTED OUT, THIS IS NOT EASY.
BUT I THINK IT IS THE ONLY WAY. THE KEY THAT WILL UNLOCK THE DOOR TO DIGNITY FOR OUR
DEPRIVED CITIZENS IS A GOOD JOB. A MAN MUST HAVE SELF-RESPECT TO HAVE THE RESPECT OF OTHERS.
D. THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION SHOWS NO INCLINATION TO MAKE THE FULLEST POSSIBLE
USE OF BUSINESS CREATIVITY AS THE BEST HOPE OF SOLVING URBAN PROBLEMS.

NOR IS THE ADMINISTRATION MAKING BEST USE OF THE FEDERAL BILLIONS IT NOW IS
SPENDING. FOR INSTANCE, A CITIZENS' BOARD OF INQUIRY INTO HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION
IN THE UNITED STATES HAS FOUND THAT FOOD PROGRAMS ADMINISTERED BY THE AGRICULTURE
DEPARTMENT REACH ONLY 16 PER CENT OF THE POOR AND THAT MALNUTRITION HAS
Risen Sharply Over The Past Decade. VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY BEATS THE BUSHES FOR
FROM GOVERNMENT COFFERS,
SUMMERTIME 'COOL IT' JOB MONEY BUT MOST OF THE INCREASE IN SUMMER JOBS THIS YEAR
WILL NOT COME FROM GOVERNMENT EFFORTS BUT FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR...FROM THE
NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF BUSINEESMEN.
VII. Government doesn't really produce anything but services... and it can't give the people anything it doesn't take from them in the first place.

VIII. There are times when government takes too much from the private citizen, from the private sector of the economy. When this happens, government training and anti-poverty programs aren't much help because there is no job waiting at the end of the training period. The best answer to poverty is a good-paying job, and the best way to create jobs is to encourage sound growth in the economy. We have sound growth when we don't take cheap dollars and pay ourselves more than our production is worth, and we have sound government when government serves the people... and not the other way around.

IX. It's often said that people get the kind of government they deserve. This is to say that if you want good government, you have to do something about it. You have to become involved. Americans love to gripe. You don't have to join the army to find that out... just get yourself elected to Congress. Seriously, it's a lot better to get involved and to try to do something about what gripes you than to just sit back and complain.
III. PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY PHYSICIANS, ARE HIGHLY REGARDED BY THOSE OUTSIDE THEIR PROFESSION. THIS MEANS THEY ARE IN A POSITION TO TAKE A POSITIVE APPROACH TO POLITICS...AND TO MAKE A TREMENDOUS CONTRIBUTION TO GOOD GOVERNMENT. THEY CAN HAVE A HAND IN SHAPING LEGISLATION. THEY CAN DO THIS BY PARTICIPATING DIRECTLY IN THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS. A DOCTOR MIGHT RUN FOR PUBLIC OFFICE HIMSELF OR PERSUADE OTHER CAPABLE MEN AND WOMEN TO DO SO. HE CAN COMMUNICATE WITH OTHERS ON ISSUES AND CANDIDATES AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE PARTY OF HIS CHOICE. HE CAN BECOME A FORCE FOR GOOD GOVERNMENT AND A SOUND SOCIETY.

TO PRESERVE AND NURTURE OUR REPUBLICAN FORM OF GOVT.

Responsibility we all bear and share. That is the high purpose to which we must constantly re dedicate ourselves, so that our great form of government may continue to live. It is my deep conviction that you—all of you—will measure up to that responsibility...that all of you will dare to stand up and be counted for America.

We have come to a turning point in terms of the civil disorders that are tearing America apart. We must heal our divisions and make our country whole.

We have come to a crossroads in race relations in America. It is a time when every American should turn to and ponder those most important words in the Declaration of Independence which read: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

We know that no man is quite like another—that each is born with special characteristics and varying amounts of native intelligence and into different economic circumstances. The authors of the Declaration of Independence were speaking of inherent equality. They were talking about human dignity. They were talking about equality before the law, and the respect of one human being for another.

No citizen of this Nation should feel compelled to go about with a sign around his neck, proclaiming "I am a man."

This, basically, is what the civil disorders we have been experiencing are all about. Every man has to feel he counts for something or he may lash out at others. No man will ever be safe in a society which breeds hostility and hatred.

It can be said that the assassination of Martin Luther King was used as an excuse for the arson and looting that followed. It would be more accurate to say it was the trigger that touched it off. It makes still more sense to say that the arson and the looting are symptoms of a disease which is plaguing America—the disease of inequality and hostility between the races.

Just as America could not live half slave and half free, so America cannot live with blacks hating whites and whites hating blacks.

There is a great need now for an era of reconciliation and an era of reconstruction in America, not only in terms of rebuilding our cities but in terms of rebuilding people.

Whites cannot just flee to the suburbs and think they are shutting the door.
on the race problem. It simply won't work. The problem won't go away.

The suburbs are largely bedroom communities. Most Americans earn their living in the cities. If the cities die, all Americans will be affected.

To make the cities healthy, we must heal their real sickness—the sickness of deprivation brought on by a century of neglect. The gap of generations—the need for better schooling, training, jobs and housing for the people of the central cities—must be bridged as rapidly as possible.

How do we heal the sickness of the cities—by pouring more government billions into such programs as urban renewal, which displaces many more people than it houses?

The old programs have not worked, yet the federal planners would dump additional billions into the same kind of pot...just fill it up a little more. The resulting potion would be the same, the medicine that just isn't working.

I believe the only way the problems of the cities will be solved and the sickness of the cities healed is for government to employ the kind of creativity found in business and industry...to employ this creativity by harnessing it for the public good...to provide the deprived with decent jobs and housing.

This can be done by offering industry tax incentives to become an on-the-job trainer for the hard-core unemployed and the underemployed, a builder of new plant and low-income housing in the central cities, an employer who offers hope for lives of dignity and decency to human beings now at the borderline or below it.

As the Kerner Commission has pointed out, this is not easy. But the commission endorsed it, and I think it is the only way. The key that will unlock the door to dignity for our deprived citizens is a good job. A man must have self-respect to have the respect of others.

The present Administration shows no inclination to make the fullest possible use of business creativity as the best hope of solving urban problems. Nor is the Administration making best use of the federal billions it now is spending.

Government job-training and anti-poverty programs are not much help if there is no job waiting at the end of the training period. The best answer to poverty is a good-paying job.

Of course, jobs alone won't end the rioting. We found that out in Washington, D.C. Perhaps the violence will stop only when we begin living the Declaration of Independence.

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