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ADDRESS BY VICE PRESIDENT GERALD R. FORD
NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA
JULY 29, 1974 - 12:00 P.M. - P.D.T.

FOR RELEASE ON DELIVERY

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for your invitation. Let me commend you, Mr. Jordan for bringing Who's Who in the Civil Rights Community together for this the 64th Annual Convention of the National Urban League. I noticed that your program includes such notables as the Rev. Jesse Jackson, John Powell, Chairman of the EEOC and California Congresswoman Yvonne Braithwaite Burke.

As I looked forward to making this appearance, my mind wandered back to the Year 1950 and the beginning of the Third Quarter of this Century. I had just completed my first term as the Congressman from Michigan's Fifth Congressional District and was getting ready for the forthcoming Fall Election Campaign. Little did I know at that time that one day I would be Vice President of the United States and called upon to speak at this or any other major national convention. In fact I felt fortunate, to say the least, to be elected to the Congress at such a young and tender age. At the time I felt I had arrived and was holding the most important political post I would ever be called upon to fill.

Back in 1950, The Urban League had been in existence some forty years and was struggling under the masterful leadership of Mr. Lester Granger to make a dent on the national conscience. The late, great, Whitney Young was managing a local urban league chapter in the midwest, learning the ropes, sharpening his leadership skill and preparing himself for the brilliant career on which he was to enter and the phenomenal expansion the League was to experience under his leadership.

I am sure that although Mr. Granger had a vision, a dream of the day the Urban League would become a potent national force and play a leading

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role in the continuing reform movement that is part and parcel of the American form of democracy, little did he know that he would live long enough to see it all happen.

Yes, a great deal has happened to this country, to its people, to its organizations, to its culture and to its society during the Third Quarter of this Century. There is already a vast difference between the American Society of the 1950's and the one that will exist in 1975. The Urban League had much to do -- did more than its fair share in fact -- to bring about the changes for the better that all right thinking Americans are proud of. So much so that the nature of the civil rights struggle has changed and with it has come a higher level of involvement in national affairs, improved opportunities, new and different challenges and changing expectations with regard to the participation of minorities and women in the government and economic arena.

The League and its supporters are to be commended for the contributions you have made to this country and all its citizens. This is especially true with reference to its non-white citizens.

At the time of my Confirmation hearings I felt the thrust of the change that has occurred when a civil rights leader was heard to say, "You can put all the black and brown folks Jerry Ford knows in the trunk of a Pinto and still have room for the GOP Elephant." That of course was an exaggeration, but I understood the thrust of his comment and the reason for his anxieties. And when such men of stature as Clarence Mitchell, Roy Wilkins, Vernon Jordan and Jesse Jackson spoke out against my confirmation, I thoroughly realized the impact of both the change and expectations on the part of minorities. Let me assure you that during my Confirmation Hearings Minorities put me on notice of their concerns.

Although not what you might like it to be, my civil rights record is anything but negative and it is a long, long way from standing in the doorway of a schoolhouse in defiance of a Federal Court Order in an attempt to deny black children a quality education. Therefore I am proud of my record in this area.

In addition, I can say that since I became your Vice President I have sincerely tried to be Vice President of all of the people.

My first White House Luncheon was with Top Black Presidential Appointees. Immediately following that, I met with a group of National Civil Rights Leaders headed by Roy Wilkins, the Dean of the Civil Rights Movement. One of my first public appearances was before a group of 700 Black Republicans from ^{out} through the country who attended the Lincoln Day Dinner sponsored by the Capitol City Republican Club in the Nation's Capitol. I have also spoken before The National Association of Black Manufacturers, The Links, Inc. and The National Council of Negro Women. Also I have toured The Opportunities Industrialization Centers in Philadelphia with the Rev. Leon Sullivan, and on August 9, I will officiate at a ground breaking ceremony at a new housing project in the Watts Area of Los Angeles.



Write these facts not in self serving fashion, but to illustrate that my door is open to all. I want you to know, too, that I have instructed my staff to use the full range of authority vested in the Vice President's office, little though it is, in an attempt to be as cooperative and as helpful as possible to all Americans - black, brown, and white alike.

In glancing over your program I noticed that the theme of the conference is "Full Employment as a National Goal." Besides a discussion of employment, I noticed several other important issues to be discussed including, "Politics 1974."

Although each of the issues to be discussed is worthy of comment, I am going to limit my remarks to politics and employment, in that order. I am going to make a few general comments about politics first because I feel that the success the League enjoys today and the progress you hope to make in the future will rest on the ability of Blacks and other Non-White Political Leaders to become successful, pragmatic politicians.

National policy, domestic and foreign, is made by elected political officials and carried out by political appointees. If what you do at this conference

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is to be of any lasting value it will be because elected officials in the halls of the Congress, the State Legislatures, County Commissioners and City Council chambers will take up your cause. They will engage in public debate setting forth your position where a clash of ideas and ideals will occur. This will result in the development of workable solutions that will be legislated into law.

I think politics holds out both the challenge and the opportunity for progress because among other things, the interest of blacks, browns and women are no longer being represented by proxy. By this I mean the minority community is sending forth its own representatives to Congress, to statewide offices, State legislators, to Mayors offices and to other city and county elective positions.

The record shows that there are sixteen Black United States Representatives and one United States Senator. There are some 236 Black State Legislators and 108 Black Mayors plus 62 Vice Mayors. Also there are some 76 Spanish surnamed Federal and State Legislators. In addition, women elected officials have made significant strides at National, State and Local levels. Some 3,000 women were recently reported to be candidates for upcoming elections.

In some instances, the chairmen of some of the most important legislative committees in both house of the various State Legislatures are minorities and women. For instance blacks hold the following key positions: S. Howard Woodson is Speaker of the Assembly in the State of New Jersey; Leon Thompson is Minority Leader in the House of Representatives in the State of Arizona, Arris T. Allen is Minority Leader in the House of Representatives in the State of Maryland and Corneal Davis is Assistant Minority Leader in the House of Representatives in the State of Illinois. My own native State, Michigan, has the largest number of Black elected officials of any State in the U. S. with a total of 194.

I have not touched upon the important appointive offices that blacks and women and other minorities are holding at all levels of Government: Federal, State and Local which is also significant. For example, in the First Nixon

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Administration there were eight Sub-Cabinet or Senior Executive Appointments made by President Nixon that had to be confirmed by the United States Senate. Incidentally, when an individual has to be confirmed by the Senate it means, among other things that that individual has policy-making and regulatory authority, and in some instances a multi-million dollar budget under his or her control.

For example when Jim Farmer was serving as the Assistant Secretary for Administration at the U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, the statute required that he sign off on all monies spent at HEW. That Agency incidentally has the second largest budget in government. During the time Farmer was there it was more than \$60 billion.



Since you will be talking about employment, we can turn to the Labor Department where Art Fletcher served as the Assistant Secretary for Employment Standards and where he started the Equal Employment Enforcement Revolution with the issuance of The Philadelphia Plan and Order No. IV. This was the first time the Federal government issued legally binding standards that defined employment discrimination. Many of the recent multi-million dollar settlements that industry is now paying for having discriminated against minorities and women is a direct result of the fact that the courts ruled that The Philadelphia Plan and Order No. IV was legal and a fit and proper way to achieve equal employment.

Another individual who served during President Nixon's first administration is Sam Jackson who was General Assistant Secretary for the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Jackson had sign off authority on \$2 billion for specific urban and rural development funds alone and general sign off authority on practically all monies expended by the Department.

In the present Administration there is Norman B. Houston, an appointed Member of The Renegotiation Board which is the Federal Agency responsible for the elimination of excessive profits on defense and space contracts and related subcontracts.

John H. Powell, Jr. is Chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Powell is in charge of nearly 2000 employees in 32

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District offices, 7 Regional offices and 5 Litigation centers throughout the country and his budget for the fiscal year just ended was \$43 million -- a budget which has nearly quadrupled in four years.

Samuel C. Adams, Jr. is Assistant Administrator for Africa at the U. S. Department of State's Agency for International Development. Sam Adams heads an A. I. D. program for developing countries and regional organizations of Africa which has amounted to about \$170 million annually in recent years. There are more than 450 employees in both the Washington, D. C. and Overseas Staff of the Bureau for Africa.

Constance (Connie) Newman is one of four Commissioners with The Consumer Product Safety Commission, established last year. The Commission estimates expenditures of \$30.9 million during its first year of operation and has nearly 900 employees.

Dr. Gloria E. A. Toote, Assistant Secretary for Equal Opportunity at The Department of Housing and Urban Development, is responsible for enforcing the Fair Housing Law throughout the Nation, not only for HUD but for all housing. Dr. Toote is also the contract Compliance Officer for HUD which lets over \$5 billion worth of contracts.

Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. is Assistant Secretary for Environment, Safety and Consumer Affairs at The Department of Transportation and exercises executive direction over seven different offices including Safety Affairs and Environmental Affairs. He is also Chief of the Federal Anti-Skyjack Program.

Stanley B. Thomas, Jr., as Assistant Secretary for Human Development for The Department of Health, Education and Welfare oversees a budget of \$900 million and a staff of 932 people in Washington, D. C. and in ten Regional offices of HEW.

I cite these individuals because of the attitude of many, both black and white, and possibly a majority of blacks, that any appointment in this or any other Administration is "tokenism."

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Ladies and gentlemen, when a black person such as Norman B. Houston sits on the Renegotiation Board and helps decide how much money a major government contractor can make, that isn't tokenism, that's mainstream America. When John Powell, Chairman of EEOC, takes over and manages a regulatory agency that can force major American employers to pay millions of dollars in back pay and other money damages for discriminating against minorities, that isn't tokenism, that's mainstream America. When Assistant Secretary Stanley Thomas of HEW is responsible for the expenditures of \$800 million, that isn't tokenism, that too is mainstream America. I could go on and on and cite a significant number of other appointments in which blacks and other minorities have discretionary powers with regard to spending of money, managing programs, developing guidelines and enforcing the law. Decision making powers that affect every stream of American life including the black community. I personally can assure you that these individuals have not sold out nor have they abandoned the cause. They are working "inside" the system as effective catalysts of change to demonstrate not only their ability to enforce the law and make the system work for whites, but to manage their affairs in such a way as to include blacks and other minorities, thus strengthening the country and the system.

As you strive to achieve increased effectiveness in the political arena remember the captains of industry, other business leaders, educators and independent institutions look to government to establish policies at the national, state and local level. In short the government establishes monetary policy, housing policy, transportation policy, energy policy, education policy, training and employment policy. They are carried out at the state and local levels and affect individuals, private industry and public agencies. The heads of these business organizations, institutions, and industrial concerns give due regard to those responsible for setting the policies and administering programs as well as to those applying the rules and regulations. Again, that is why I am compelled to say that the success of much of what you do here and in the future rests on how effective you become as practicing, pragmatic politicians.

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My final word with reference to politics is this: in my opinion a heavy concentration of blacks in one party is not good for the country. It will not produce good government, it is not good for either political party, nor is it good for the black community. Add to this the current and future trends regarding the shifting of increased responsibilities to manage public affairs to the state and local level and it appears more vital than ever that blacks should be drawn into both political parties. For example, it is not uncommon to find the national administration under the leadership of one political party, the Congress under another and state and local government being divided between both parties. Under such circumstances, it is imperative that both parties, not just one party, enjoy the participation, the advice, guidance and counsel of successful black politicians, public administrators, program officers, and other leaders. This is especially true if government at any level is to work for all the people in today's fast changing environment.

Now let me turn to employment-- a 10-letter way of saying "jobs."

Under current circumstances, the shift in world economic power is a matter of considerable concern when one is talking about full employment. Today industrial nations are depending on developing and underdeveloped countries for raw materials as never before. The workforces of third world countries are labor intense. Thus in many instances their leaders are demanding that labor intense manufacturing and industrial facilities be built in their countries. This means that manufacturing industries with jobs requiring low skills will be located increasingly in third world countries. It also means that the workers in industrial and super industrial countries will become more highly technical.

Therefore, when we talk about full employment in America during the final quarter of this century, we are talking about finding and or creating jobs that demand skilled, technical and professional people.

This is especially true if America is to remain the industrial leader ^{ship} of the world. Earlier this month, while speaking before the National

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Conference of the National Alliance of Businessmen, I mentioned there that certain labor economists had declared that a skilled, technically and professionally competent workforce is an invaluable national asset. I stated that these economists stressed the point by suggesting that such a workforce is the prime instrument of defense in economic, political or military warfare.

This means that during the final quarter of this century, America will have to develop the most able and productive workforce this country has ever produced. This also means that we will need the heretofore un-tapped skills, technical and professional abilities of all Americans of sound body and mind, women and minorities included.

The current national administration recognized the need to renew, expand and further develop the nations workforce. This is why the enforcement of equal employment legislation has become the thrust of our Civil Rights effort. We saw the need to inspire minorities and women to develop themselves to the fullest. That is why the budgets of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance and The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission increased significantly during the Nixon Administration.

In 1972 the Congress gave the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission authority to sue private employers who fail to voluntarily comply with Federal laws, and gave the Attorney General similar authority against public employers. To date over 240 lawsuits have been filed by EEOC. These achievements have not been the work of any one political party or any single branch of government. They are the result, I believe, of a widespread consensus in our society that equal opportunity in employment -- and to the economic rewards which result from gainful employment -- is a basic right of all Americans, a right which is morally as well as legally guaranteed by our form of government. This is to say that we have arrived at the best of all possible worlds. Even with the progress which has been made, minorities and women continue to occupy the lowest-paying, least desirable jobs -- when they have jobs at all. ~~Non-discrimination laws cannot alone change these gross disparities.~~

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Because of this, the National Urban League, Opportunities Industrialization Centers and others will become more important than ever. Through your involvement in training, job placement and your close working relationship with industry and government you have developed the expertise, the know-how that renders you an essential national resource. I have no doubt that you will fulfill that role.

Recently I observed that "This Nation has raised the last generation of American citizens that will see some of its members denied opportunity to find and hold decent jobs and have productive careers through no fault of their own." I am convinced that my prediction is correct.

Ladies and gentlemen, the nature of our struggle has changed.

Minorities and women are not standing on the outside trying to get Civil Rights laws on the books. The laws are on the books and significant numbers are now on the inside helping to enforce them. Their numbers are certain to increase in the immediate and distant future. Minorities are no longer marching and staging sit-ins to gain access to the lunch counter and other public accommodations. The thrust in the 70's is to own some of those lunch counters and other business enterprises. That's as it should be.

By the middle of the next decade, 1985 much of the current national leadership in government and business will have left the scene. By the year 2000 we will all be gone -- at least to pasture.

In the meantime, new and different domestic and international policies will have to be developed and implemented. Old laws will be re-written or discarded. The mission of old departments and agencies redefined and new ones developed -- unprofitable industries discarded and new ones organized.

There are new books to be written, new medicines to be discovered, cities to be planned, bridges to be built, buildings to construct, poems to be written, pictures to paint, songs to sing and truths to reveal -- none of which exist today. There is nothing new about this. We renew America every twenty-five to fifty years. However, this time America's minorities and women, for the first time in our history, will be full and equal participants in the endeavor.

I take this opportunity -- this forum to renew the pledge that I made on the day I was first admitted to the bar ---- to dedicate my life and energy to the role of law and equal justice for all Americans.

Thank you for inviting me and good luck in your endeavors.