

✓ Msgr. Leggins  
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REMARKS

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VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY

PLANS FOR PROGRESS CONFERENCE

WASHINGTON, D.C.

January 25, 1966

Howard University  
Choir.

About seven years ago, I had a conversation with a man whom all of us remember vividly.

I am speaking, of course, of Nikita Khrushchev.

I had quite a talk with him -- eight hours of it, in fact.

↳ He declared then that our two systems should not compete on the field of battle. Rather, he challenged us to what he called "peaceful competition" -- to show which system could yield more rapid progress and higher living standards to its people.

Our system, he told me, was worn out and played out. It was communism, he said, which was new, young, vital, and brimming with energy.

"Chairman Khrushchev," I replied, "we haven't even begun to compete yet. When we do, we'll compete you right out of Gorki Park."

I don't think he believed me for one instant.

But I had my reasons for confidence -- and primary among them was the competitive vigor and tremendous initiative of our American businessmen . . . of American labor . . . of our American farmers.

I was confident that, if government did its part, our economy could really move ahead. As I used to say in those days: "Let's take modern economic policy out of the doghouse and put it in the White House."

That is just what <sup>has</sup> happened.

As we meet here tonight, we are enjoying our 59th month of continuous economic growth. Profits are up . . . wages are up . . . farm income is up . . . savings are up . . . the stock market is <sup>at all-time</sup> high . . . unemployment is down to its lowest point in nine years . . . more people are working than ever in history . . . and our balance of payments deficit is sharply reduced.

We recognize that the great corporations represented in this room -- and the men who lead them -- have, <sup>in a large measure,</sup> provided <sup>the</sup> leadership to bring these things about.

<sup>and</sup> government has played a vital part in creating and maintaining the kind of economic climate in which private initiative can flourish.

"Let my people go" -- well, at long last we have said in government "Let our economy grow" -- & it has!

↳ But the primary credit belongs to the private sector --  
for ours is a free economy, drawing its vigor from personal  
initiative and private enterprise.

↳ Economic growth has brought us prosperity and  
well-being unknown in the previous history of the world.

50%  
world  
GNP

↳ But economic growth alone cannot be expected to solve  
all our problems -- even all our economic problems.

↳ Foremost among these remaining problems is the  
necessity for making all of our people more productive . . .  
for including all of our people in our economic growth  
. . . for finding new ways to release the unlimited creative  
and productive potential of all the American people. —

*We need everyone - at his best!*

↳ This, of course, has been the concern of your companies for years -- and especially since you formed the Plans for Progress program.

↳ For more than four years we have been fighting discrimination in employment through Plans for Progress. And we have come a long way toward winning that fight.

But despite our success, we must face <sup>some</sup> hard facts:

↳ The unemployment rate for our Negro citizens continues to be approximately twice that for white citizens;

↳ -- Although the occupational status of the Negro has improved over the country in the past 30 years, in most states he still has the same occupational distribution relative to whites that he had in 1940 and 1950;

↳ -- In a large majority of states there has been, since World War II, a widening of the gap between the incomes of whites and Negroes;

*Discrimination -  
bad policy  
bad economics  
bad business  
bad human  
relations*

-- If the proportion of Negro men qualified as professional and technical workers were to continue to increase at the 1940-1960 rate, it would take until the year 2490 for them to achieve proportional representation in these job categories. *↳* I know that, since 1960, this situation has improved -- but nevertheless it gives you some idea of the scope of the task *ahead of us.*

*↳* We have, I hope, learned that adopting nondiscriminatory hiring and promotion policies is only the first step.

*↳* We must also undertake a variety of positive actions to reduce the employment gap which separates the average Negro worker from his fellow citizens.

*and,* This is a challenge which Plans for Progress has already begun to meet. I emphasize the word begun.

↳ Your encouragement of local Plans for Progress councils  
. . . your seminars on federal job training programs . . .  
our task force for motivating Negro young people -- these  
are only first steps.

↳ I was told ~~this afternoon~~ of one "Plans for Progress"  
company that needs 10,000 workers. And they can't be  
found. This company has scoured its city and region and  
still can't find enough trainable people.

↳ And, this company does not shirk in conducting training  
programs. It already devotes more floor space to training  
and education than any university in its state -- and it  
is not a backward state.

↳ I'm sure that this experience -- of needing people  
and not being able to find them -- is a common one in  
this audience. *Shortage of workers, yet unemployed!*

↳ What can Plans for Progress companies do right now?

well,

-- You can make training and employment opportunity available to graduates of the Job Corps and Neighborhood Youth Corps. These young men and women have received basic academic and job training . . . they have recaptured a sense of initiative and motivation . . . and they want to show what they can do.

← Sargent Shriver <sup>of OEO</sup> and Secretary of Labor Willard Wirtz have established special offices to assist in the placement of Job Corps and Neighborhood Youth Corps personnel.

Job Corps!

↳ You can contact these offices and indicate your willingness to provide opportunity to people now able to meet it.

and,

-- You can provide summer jobs as part of President Johnson's Youth Opportunity Campaign. Frequently the promise of a summer job will keep a potential <sup>school</sup> dropout in school -- and help get him back to school in the fall.

Youth Unemployment

↳ Part-time jobs during the school year help meet the same need.

↳ -- You can work closely with federal and state government to use the many job training and work experience programs now underway. ↳ You need to know more about these programs. And we in government need to establish better communication with you.

↳ The Plans for Progress seminars on federally-sponsored job training programs -- now scheduled for many of our major cities -- will help do this.

↳ -- You can work actively in your communities to stimulate others to help in Plans for Progress. And you can mobilize support for other programs pursuing the same objectives.

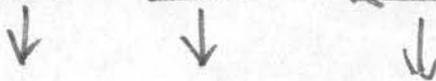
↳ Starting with Project Head Start, and continuing through specialized training at the college level, we have the corporate and individual responsibility to support plans and programs designed to combat deprivation and functional illiteracy.

↳ We also have the duty to support local and national efforts to provide better housing . . . more adequate health programs . . . and broader participation of all our people in the economic and political processes of our nation.

↳ Local Plans for Progress councils offer a unique opportunity to assume this kind of dynamic and enlightened leadership.

*But* ↳ To achieve these goals, we are going to have to work harder. ↳ We are going to have to work in more areas. And we are going to have to draw more people into our efforts.

↳ In his State of the Union Message on January 12, President Johnson said that the Great Society leads us along three roads -- growth, justice and liberation.



Concerning the path of liberation, he said:

" . . . In the midst of abundance, modern man walks oppressed by forces which menace and confine the quality of his life, and which individual abundance alone will not overcome.

"We can subdue and we can master these forces, bring increased meaning to our lives, if all of us -- government and citizens -- are bold enough to change old ways, daring enough to assault new dangers, and if the dream is dear enough to call forth the limitless capacities of this great people."

↳ This is the clear challenge we must meet.

And, in meeting it, we will erase in this world any doubt there may be about the ability of free men to build for themselves a better and more just society.

For, as I told Chairman Khrushchev seven years ago -- the real revolution in the world is not a Marxist revolution. It is man's revolution against oppression and coercion, and toward human dignity and self-determination. This is the revolution we must lead.

↳ If we continue our work -- if we remain true to what we believe in -- we can, in this country, achieve what we seek: one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

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