

Text of White House Telegram Replying to N.A.A.C.P.

Special to The New York Times

Following is the text of a telegram from Leonard Garment, special consultant to President Nixon, to Bishop Stephen G. Spottswood, chairman of the Board of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, replying to a speech by Bishop Spottswood last night that was critical of the Administration's racial policies:

The comments you made in your speech at the N.A.A.C.P. convention are an unfair and disheartening attack on an Administration which:

¶ Inaugurated the Philadelphia Plan, which for the first time is opening up the high-paying construction trades to blacks on a major scale;

¶ Proposed \$1.5-billion to aid the process of desegregation, and to help fund experimental projects to promote interracial experiences among children where racial isolation persists;

¶ Proposed the landmark family assistance plan, for the first time providing a floor under the incomes of every family in America, wherever it lives;

¶ Greatly improved existing family food assistance programs and proposed legislation granting free food stamps to very low income families;

¶ Proposed a revolutionary family health insurance program for all poor families which would provide a comprehensive package of health services, including both hospital and outpatient care;

¶ Proposed changes to present subsidized housing programs that would allow rent to vary with income so that families would not be forced to move at some arbitrary income limit;

¶ Named more blacks to policy-making posts than any previous Administration.

In addition, your comments misstate and misrepresent the record of the Administration so as to present it in a highly distorting light. For example:

¶ The Administration's efforts in the area of equal employment opportunity are dismissed with a reference to the early defense contracts with textile companies. No reference is made to subsequent action on those contracts or to the stringent conditions imposed in more recent defense contracts in the aircraft and shipbuilding industries or to the effects of the Philadelphia Plan in the construction industry.

¶ The Administration is accused of pulling back on school desegregation even though the number of black public school students in desegregated school systems in the 11 Southern states will have increased from 164,000 at the end of the 1968-1969 school year to well over one million at the start of the 1970-71 school year.

¶ The Administration is charged with weakening the Voting Rights Act "in the House"; the bill as enacted and signed by the President,

despite widespread doubt about the constitutionality of the 18-year-old vote, is stronger in its present version since it incorporates the existing Voting Rights Act and suspends literacy tests nationwide. In this connection, and only a week ago, Roy Wilkins, Clarence Mitchell and Senator Brooke "hailed" the President for signing the bill and praised his "statesmanship" for doing so.

While the speech accuses the Administration of opposing cease-and-desist powers for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, it does not point out that the Administration has proposed legislation that would enable the E.E.O.C. to bring court actions immediately against employment discrimination, thus preventing the long delay that would be required to

establish the machinery necessary to implement cease-and-desist legislation and also avoiding the case backlog problems already faced by agencies such as the N.L.R.B.

It is grossly unfair to take the phrase "benign neglect" out of context, to persist in the false characterization of the Moynihan memorandum, and to misuse the phrase as a label to characterize Administration policies, when every

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single constructive Administration measure in this area is ignored in the rest of the speech.

Major efforts to open housing opportunities in suburban areas to expand minority ownership, to find new ways to attack entrenched poverty problems, as well as small-scale experimental projects such as funding youth organizations united in collaborations with

the National Urban League (a risk this Administration was willing to take where the previous one would not) are all ignored.

It is one thing to criticize, to give voice to deeply-felt concerns and to articulate real disappointments. Everyone benefits from such a debate. It is an entirely different thing to search out ways to portray the actions of this Administration in the

Administration as Anti-Negro

worst possible light, to rally every fear, and reinforce every anxiety. Such a message, painting a false picture of what the Administration has done, is doing, and hopes to do, sows distrust and makes our commonly-agreed-on goals more difficult to achieve.

I note that even now, as speakers at your convention are attacking every aspect of the Administration's record

in this area, and doing so without a balancing word, members of the Administration are working with many of your colleagues on important projects of mutual concern.

The President and the Administration are committed to achieving equal opportunity for every American, and are determined to maintain their efforts to reach that goal.