

Government and business must accept responsibility to provide all Americans with opportunity to earn an adequate income. Private industry must greatly accelerate its efforts to recruit, train and hire the hard-core unemployed.

When the private sector is unable to provide employment to those who are both able and willing to work, then in a free society the Government must of necessity assume the responsibility and act as the employer of last resort or must assure adequate income levels for those who are unable to work.

The clear implication of these statements is that we must develop a national planning mechanism to insure the necessary coordination of efforts in the two sectors. For the ends sought cannot be realized unless we possess the institutional means to assess our national needs, to establish priorities for meeting those needs within the limitations of our resources, and then to allocate the resources between and within the private and public sectors to accomplish our defined purposes. Since the planning must be democratic, not merely business but all the functioning groups of the society must be heard in the process of establishing priorities and achieving goals.

We are not proposing here, it should be understood, any system of coercion. Rather we propose use of the democratic process to arrive at a consensus with respect to goals, priorities, and time schedule for their achievement. Out of this consensual process there would emerge, as a byproduct, a common framework of assumptions as to the future course of the economy. Within such a framework, both Government decisions and decisions in the private sector could be made with greater confidence and would be more effective because they would reinforce each other rather than work, as they now frequently do, at cross purposes. The net effect of such democratic planning would be not restraint but liberation. Our great resources could be deployed much more effectively in meeting private and public needs.

The plan would provide the basis for determination of the selective measures, monetary and fiscal among others, needed to assure the availability at the right time of the resources needed to achieve the plan's goals. Since the plan will have evolved from democratic consensus, the selective measures required to carry it out should obtain ready and widespread acceptance. There should therefore be little difficulty in enlisting the cooperation of the political authorities in enacting and applying such selective measures as may be needed to facilitate implementation of the plan.

Nothing has happened since the summer of 1967 to diminish the urgency of the challenges the urban coalition asks us to face. On the contrary. President Johnson in his February 22 message on urban problems stressed, "There is no time to lose." He declared:

Today, America's cities are in crisis. This clear and urgent warning rises from the decay of decades—and is amplified by the harsh realities of the present.

There is no time to lose, but we are losing it. The UAW seriously urges upon the Congress as a body, and upon each Congressman and Senator, a more sober consideration of the real dangers and opportunities implicit in our domestic situation, not so much in terms of what might be regarded as opportune in an election year but rather in a dispassionate effort to clear away the cobwebs of fashionable assumption and get to the bone and marrow of our predicament.

Whether we look abroad to the cities of the struggling and developing nations or steadily confront the crises of our own communities,