

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

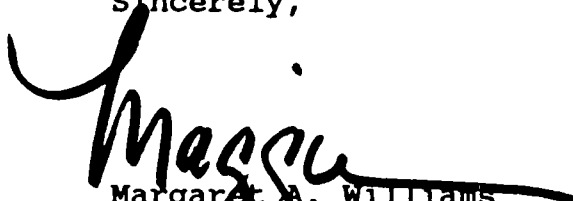
May 31, 1994

Robert D. Pomeroy, Jr.
311 Wabash Avenue
Kansas City, Missouri 64124

Dear Bob:

Thank you for your kind words and nice poetry.
As you surmised, some days are more challenging than
others. Encouragement and support are always
welcomed. Thank you again for your thoughtfulness.

Sincerely,


Margaret A. Williams
Chief of Staff to the
First Lady

These days I'd much rather
be in Kansas. Hope you
and your family are well.

robert d. pomeroy, jr.

311 Wabash Ave.
Kansas City, Mo. 64124
March 16, 1994

Attention: Maggie Williams

Dear Maggie,

I wrote "Mr. President" in early January '93, but it seems appropriate now as well, so I thought I'd share it. Perhaps it should be subtitled, "To Hell With The Press".

How are things with you? I see your name in the press occassionally, but I can only image how busy and how tough it is. Anyway, I included a second poem for you. Hope it does brighten up your day.

Let me hear from you sometime. I'm still currently in Kansas City and can be reached at (816) 483-7954.

Bob

Robert D. Pomeroy, Jr.

I WISH I COULD

If I could have a wish today,
do you know what it'd be?
I'd give you a bright, sunny day,
a gift to you from me.

A sunny day with flowers,
birds singing a sweet song
to help forget the cloudy days
that've been around too long.

Look outside and when you see
bright sun and sky so blue,
it's my gift to you from me.
It's my wish come true.

Robert D. Pomeroy, Jr.

MR. PRESIDENT

The morning remains silent...
 silently waiting for the dawn to reveal a new day.

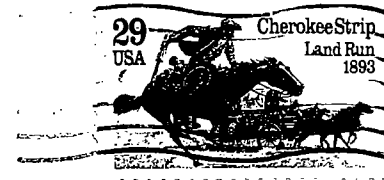
A sleeping sun lingers.

Be patient for the dawn is near...
 new footsteps will emerge for life's journey.

Stride swiftly into the future.

Don't look back...
 be secure and bold...
 knowledge and compassion will be your guides.

Pomeroy
311 Wabash
K.C. Mo.
64124



Maggie Williams
First Lady's Office
White House
Washington, D.C.

PERSONAL

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 26, 1994

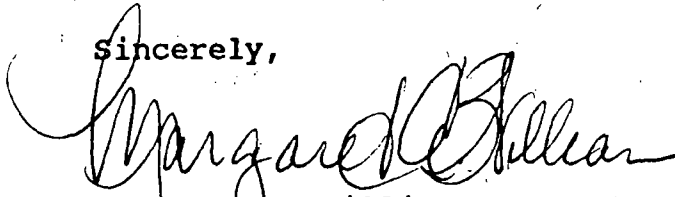
Marcel Pruwer
Pelikaanstraat, 62
2018 Antwerp, Belgium

Dear Mr. Pruwer:

Thank you for the invitation extended to Hillary Rodham Clinton. Mrs. Clinton is aware of your hard work and dedication. However, due to her busy schedule, we must decline the kind invitation.

On behalf of Mrs. Clinton, I wish you success in your project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Margaret Williams", written in dark ink.

Margaret A. Williams
Chief of Staff to the
First Lady

*unable
to per write*

INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC STRATEGY

**PELIKAANSTRAAT,62
2018 ANTWERPEN**

**TEL: +32-3-232.79.09
FAX:+32-3-231.04.10**

**Margaret Williams
Chief-of-Staff to Mrs. William J. Clinton
The White House
Washington D.C.
U.S.A.**

Antwerp, the 5th of October 1994.

Dear Mrs. Williams,

**Please find attached the copy of the fax we have sent to you on the 23rd
of September 1994.**

Looking forward to hearing from you,

**Yours sincerely,
Marcel Pruwer.**

**Managing Director
International Economic Strategy**

INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC STRATEGY

CONSULTING, INTERNATIONAL MARKETING, PUBLIC RELATIONS

**PELIKAANSTRAAT, 62
2018 ANTWERP-BELGIUM**

**TEL: 03-232.79.09
FAX:03-231.04.10**

FAX MESSAGE

ANTWERP, THE 23RD OF SEPTEMBER 1994

**FROM: MARCEL PRUWER - I.E.S.
TO : MARGARET WILLIAMS - THE WHITE HOUSE**

**Margaret Williams
Chief-of-Staff to Mrs William J Clinton
The White House
Washington D.C.**

Dear Ms Williams,

I am writing to you concerning the following matter.

Our company International Economic Strategy is a consulting, business development and marketing group based in Antwerp, Belgium.

We have become involved in a project which we think may be of some interest to Mrs. William J. Clinton. I would like to present you with some outline details in order for you to ascertain whether you would agree to discuss the project in more detail.

We have an agreement in principle with the fund-raising unit of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to propose the development and management of a major fund-raising project. The project will ideally attract major funding for the High Commissioner for Refugees and also serve to draw attention, world-wide, to the needs, priorities and activities of the U.N.H.C.R.

Our correspondent at the U.N.H.C.R. fund-raising unit in Geneva is Mr. J  sus Villanueva who can be reached at tel: +41- 22-739.83.05.

Our interest in the High Commissioner for Refugees was prompted by the enormous logistics problems confronted by that organisation with the on-going crisis in Rwanda and Zaire, along with the numerous other trouble-spots around the world in which the H.C.R. are involved as an agency offering support and life-saving possibilities to the local population.

Often the H.C.R. is effectively the agency of last resort. In addition the H.C.R. has vital diplomatic responsibilities linked to the successful negotiation and management of its tasks in difficult and sometimes dangerous circumstances.

Finance is a critical aspect, underpinning the H.C.R.'s work and capabilities. Public Relations for the H.C.R. is all-important, both for fund-raising and for stimulating political and diplomatic support for its initiatives and responsibilities.

We feel the challenge to be the mounting of an operation which will provoke world-wide excitement and interest and motivate people to offer the H.C.R. their generous support.

We think that we have found a theme and a vehicle which will act as a trigger for immense international media exposure for the organisation.

We are now ready to propose this project which we believe, through the support of the media, will engage the interest and sympathy of the international public. We will be looking at the possibility of building national campaigns around the project and using United Nations Ambassadors to sponsor the campaign in particular countries. We have no doubt that the various U.N.H.C.R. GOODWILL AMBASSADORS will be willing to co-operate with this promotion. There may also be a possibility of appointing new GOODWILL AMBASSADORS for this project.

The theme and vehicle for the promotion involve the H.C.R. participating in the proceeds of the auction of a unique and valuable objet d'art which would become the symbol of the international campaign.

We are now negotiating with the owners of this object who may agree to make the object available for a H.C.R. promotion guaranteeing a minimum donation to the organisation with a portion of the auction proceeds to be set aside for the account of the H.C.R.

Together with the fund-raising specialists at the H.C.R., we feel that the media-sensitive nature of the campaign, will serve to raise public interest in the H.C.R. in the most dramatic way. Unprecedented excitement and concern with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees could be generated by this promotion.

Executed successfully, the potential exists for a very important sum of money to be collected for the project.

An additional possibility is that a successful event could become an annual fixture in the charity calendar.

We feel that Mrs. William J. Clinton could contribute in a major way to the success of this project both in the United States and internationally. We would appreciate the opportunity to discuss with you the possibility that she plays a role in this campaign which will impact directly and in a very meaningful way on the lives of many, many, hundreds of thousands of refugee men, women and children.

Appreciative of the enormous demands on Mrs. Clinton's time we would certainly design any activity and participation so as to encroach minimally on her schedules and other engagements.

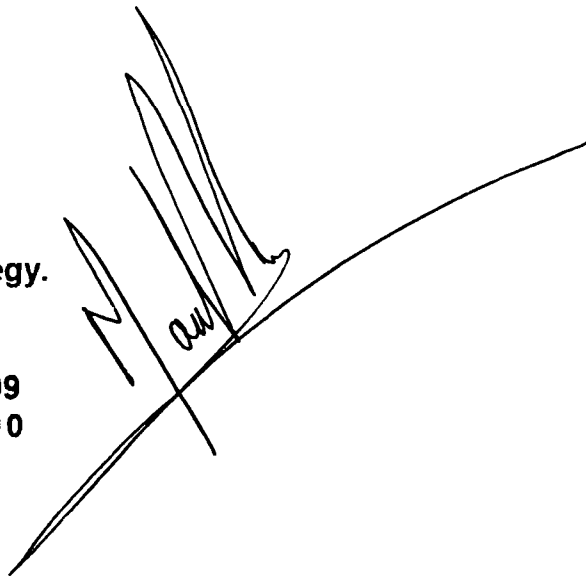
I hope that the above outlines our idea in sufficient detail and that you will allow us to pursue the project with you.

Thanking you in anticipation,

**I remain,
Yours sincerely,
Marcel Pruwer.**

**Managing Director
International Economic Strategy.**

**Telephone: + 32 - 3 - 232.79.09
Facsimile : + 32 - 3 - 231.04.10**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Pruwer', is written over a large, sweeping, curved line that extends from the middle of the page towards the bottom right corner.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 16, 1994

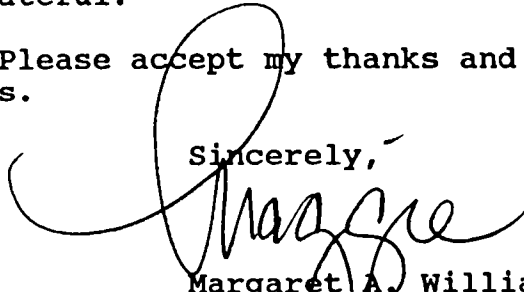
Charlene Porter
4211 East 61st Street
Kansas City, MO 64130

Dear Ms. Porter:

Your words of support and encouragement meant so much to me during the past weeks. It was very kind of you to take the time to write as you did and I am grateful.

Please accept my thanks and best wishes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Maggie", written over the word "Sincerely,".

Margaret A. Williams
Chief of Staff to the
First Lady

Windows



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Dear Maggie,

July, 1994

I'm thinking of you and praying
that your faith will support you
and give you the strength to fight this.

With God's help, I believe you will come out
of this situation intact and stronger than ever. Through
it all, you have conducted yourself in a Godly
manner. I admire that. I'm a member of Peace
Love,
Baptist Church.

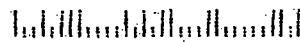
Charles, Porter



Charlene Porter
4211 East 61st Street
Kansas City, MO 64130



Honorable Maggie A. Williams
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 12, 1994

Mr. Hugh B. Price
National Urban League, Incorporated
The Equal Opportunity Building
500 East 62nd Street
New York, N.Y. 10021

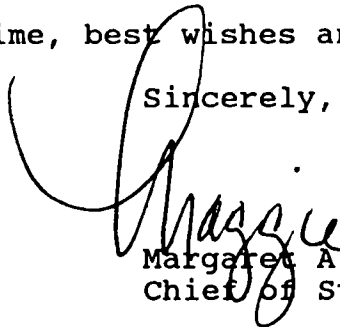
Dear Hugh:

Just a quick note to tell you how much I appreciated both your letter and the enclosed copy of your speech. They give me a good opportunity to send you this note of congratulations, albeit belatedly.

I was glad also to have your thoughts about the state of the National Urban League and its work, and I do hope we will have an opportunity to get caught up before too long.

In the meantime, best wishes and again, congratulations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maggie", is written over the typed name and title.

Margaret A. Williams
Chief of Staff to the First Lady

As Sharon Schuster explains, "There was an impressive—and overwhelming—commitment by these leaders to address the needs of girls and young women."¹⁰

The response from the media was gratifying. The AAUW has its aura of repute and integrity, so it is perhaps understandable that the news reports about its self-esteem study were taken at face value. No one suggested that the AAUW's alarming findings about the plight of the nation's girls might be the product of "advocacy research," research undertaken with an eye to "proving" conclusions that advocates are ideologically committed to and that they find politically useful. Reporters who might normally seek out alternative points of view did not do so in this case.

Despite the sensational and sweeping nature of the findings that girls' self-esteem plummets, as far as I could ascertain, none of the journalists who reported on the study interviewed any social scientists to see whether the poll that reported this was properly designed and its results properly interpreted. Except for Carol Gilligan and her followers, no other experts in adolescent psychology were cited by the press. Indeed, in none of these stories was a single critic cited, despite the existence of a large body of findings and contrary opinions that the AAUW had ignored. Because the media made no effort to look beyond the news releases given them by the AAUW, it was left to skeptics to come forward on their own. As we shall see, some did.

In the meantime, however, the AAUW's rhetoric had taken hold. When the AAUW initiated its study in 1990, self-esteem was the hot topic of the moment. Everyone wanted it; some states had task forces to help people get it. Concern about children's self-image was so high the Children's Museum in Denver installed a "self-esteem corner." Self-esteem was the cure for what ails the country and a ticket to the best-seller list.¹¹

Books with titles like *Learning to Love Yourself*, *The Inner Child Workbook*, *Co-Dependent's Guide to the Twelve Steps*, and *Children of Trauma: Recovering Your Discarded Self* sold in the millions. A National Council on Self-Esteem was established.¹² The New York State Education Department published a self-esteem manual that identifies four "components" of self-esteem. "I am somebody," "I belong," "I am competent," and "I have possibilities," it proclaims, sounding very much like Stuart Smalley on "Saturday Night Live" ("I'm good enough, I'm smart enough, and doggonit, people like me").¹³

The charge that the self-esteem of the nation's girls was being undermined was made to order for the times. But was it true? That the report was so widely and uncritically credited cannot be taken as a sign of its

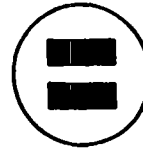
Dear Hugh:
Just a quick note to tell you how much I appreciated both your letter and the enclosed copy of your speech. They give me a good opportunity to send you this note of congratulations, albeit belatedly.

I was glad also to have your thoughts about the state of the National Urban League and its work, and I do hope we will have an opportunity to get caught up before too long.

In the meantime, best wishes and again, congratulations.

Sincerely,

MAW



National Urban League, Inc.

The Equal Opportunity Building
500 East 62nd Street, New York, N.Y. 10021
Telephone (212) 310-9000

July 22, 1994

Ms. Maggie Williams
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Maggie:

The past two months since being named President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Urban League have been very exciting for me. I have visited with a number of Urban League affiliates across the country and met with major media outlets and other corporate leaders.

In my travels I have found that the National Urban League is, in fact, a very vital organization, both at the national and grass roots levels, and that at the local level, the League meets some very real community needs.

I thought you might be interested in the keynote speech I gave Sunday at the League's annual conference in Indianapolis, where I was joined by Robert Reich, Secretary of Labor; FCC Commissioner Reed E. Hundt; Lani Guinier, Professor of Law, University of Pennsylvania Law School; Earl G. Graves, Publisher and CEO, Black Enterprise Magazine; and Deval L. Patrick, Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, among other luminaries.

I appreciate your past support and look forward to speaking with you in the near future.

Sincerely,

Hugh B. Price

Enc.

*Give
Send nice
note of
congrats*

Hugh B.Price
President and CEO

Keynote Address
National Urban League Convention
Indianapolis, Indiana
July 24, 1994

This is a thrilling moment for me, as you can well imagine. Seeing the Urban League movement arrayed before me, several thousand strong, spanning four generations and primed for action, is a stunning sight to behold.

To the veterans who have built and sustained the movement through decades of adversity and triumph, to our allies of all complexions and religious faiths who have coalesced with us, and to the next generation of Urban League leaders -- especially the NULITES students who have journeyed here from Bloomington -- I salute each of you for making the Urban League the venerable and revered movement that it is. And I salute you for your collective determination to carry our cause of social, economic and legal justice for all into the 21st century.

The thrill I feel is tempered, I must admit, by a profound sense of humility. For I am following in the awesome footsteps of the likes of George Edmund Hayes; Eugene Kinckle Jones; Lester Granger, who led the movement with such a steady hand for so many years; Whitney Young, who expanded it and ushered it into the civil rights arena; Vernon Jordan, who positioned the League as a forceful advocate for justice; and John Jacob, who sustained it through excruciatingly difficult times with dignity and compassion.

Assuming the helm of the National Urban League is also humbling because the movement so much resembles family, with all the love, support and lofty expectations typically associated with that term.

Though I admittedly am a stranger to many of you, rest assured that the Urban League is no stranger to me. In fact, I've been part of your extended family my entire life.

As a child growing up in Washington, D.C., I often heard my uncle, Dr. R. Frank Jones, speak of the League in reverent tones. Early in my career as head of the Black Coalition of New Haven, Connecticut, Bob Bowles, director of the Urban League chapter there, served on my board and as a trusted mentor.

June Branche, another dear friend in Westchester County, is the niece of Lester Granger. And I learned just the other day that Eugene Kinckle Jones was the godfather of my cousin, Winifred Norman.

Now that I'm graduating from the extended family to the immediate Urban League family, let me introduce you to several members of my own who are here this evening. First and foremost my wife, Marilyn Lloyd Price, who I love even more today than the day we married, which we're both reluctant to admit was almost 31 years ago. Those physicians and dentists here who attended Howard may remember "Mama" Lloyd from the anatomy department. She's Marilyn's mother.

Our youngest daughter, Lauren, is here. She graduated from college a year ago and now works at the Washington-based Center for Youth Development, a field that's dear to many of us. Our two other daughters are globe-trotting today and thus couldn't join us. Traer, a designer and choreographer of water fountains, is on assignment in Taiwan. Janeen, a second-year law student, has just wrapped up a summer internship in Washington and arrived earlier today in Mexico City to begin a second internship there.

My own mother, Charlotte Schuster Price, has come from Cape Cod to share this moment with me. She and my late father, Dr. Kline A. Price, lived in Washington for nearly 40 years.

My brother, Dr. Kline Price, Jr., and his wife, Bebe Drew Price, are with us. Bebe, by the way, stands for "Blood Bank". Yes, she's the daughter of the late Dr. Charles Drew, an authentic African-American and American hero. My cousins, Al and Sandi Brothers, have journeyed here from Ft. Wayne, where Sandi is active in the Urban League.

Occasionally I am asked by friends and colleagues how long I agonized over whether to accept the board's offer to become president of the National Urban League. I usually pause for a moment or three, and then reply that it took about that long. The decision was easy for several reasons.

For starters, service runs in my family. Like many physicians of his era who graduated from Howard and stayed in D.C., my father tithed with his time by volunteering many weekday mornings in the clinic for poor folk at Freedman's Hospital.

My mother was active in the movement to win Washingtonians the right to vote. Also, my parents were among the families who helped finance Charles Houston's early litigation efforts for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund that laid the legal foundation for Brown vs. Board of Education.

Reared in this tradition of service, I've devoted virtually my entire professional career to the cause of social and economic justice for our people. While it's true that I'm not an alumnus of the traditional civil rights movement, I have served our folk, effectively I would like to think, in other ways.

Indeed, I feel as though I have been apprenticing for the presidency of the League my entire professional life.

Another reason the decision was easy is because this isn't just a terrific job, it's a calling. By that I mean that we -- you and I -- who are this movement have little choice but to be in it.

Seven years ago, I yearned to become president of the public television station where I worked. It didn't happen and I was crestfallen for months. I possessed all the right credentials, or so I thought, and had run the key divisions of the station. Yet I smacked my head squarely against that glass ceiling before I'd even heard of the term.

It took my daughter Traer, who is rather spiritual, to pull me out of the funk. One day that I'll never forget, she said, "Dad, don't worry about not getting that job. You're being saved for something more important." This, obviously, is what she'd foreseen that I could not. Thank heavens that daughter always knows best.

Before charting the course for the Urban League through the remainder of this century and into the next, let me briefly describe the changing and challenging seas that we'll be navigating together. We who are African-American live, alongside all other Americans, in a world which bears little resemblance to that of a mere half-decade ago, much less a generation ago.

Communism has crumbled, falling victim to its own oppressiveness and inefficiency. Market economies now reign supreme. Nations are redefining themselves with stunning rapidity. Immigrants and refugees stream almost unchecked across borders, radically and rapidly altering the ethnic make-up of nations.

This ruthlessly competitive world waits for no nation, no ethnic group and no individual. Should any competitor falter, there is always an emerging country, an enterprising people or an eager immigrant waiting in the wings or, more likely, already seizing the opportunity to fill the void.

Technological change, "rightsizing", industrial outmigration and structural unemployment are now familiar phrases throughout the developed world. Statistically speaking, the unemployment problems of Canada, the U.K., France and Germany are twice as bad as ours.

Closer to home, America is enduring its own economic upheavals, with cities and the urban poor feeling the severest aftershocks. For millions of black folk who, thanks to the civil rights movement, have flooded into higher education, big corporations and their own mainstream businesses, these clearly are the best of times.

But for millions more of us stranded in violent, hopeless, poverty-stricken inner cities, only slavery and the half century that followed it could have been worse.

When the landmark Brown vs. Board of Education decision was handed down forty years ago this spring, I think it's fair to say we all assumed that the defeat of Jim Crow laws would fling open the doors of opportunity to the robust, post-World War II mainstream economy from which we'd by and large been excluded.

What no one foresaw back in '54 and even through the '70s was that urban economies would slowly yet steadily erode. The manufacturing jobs that once enabled blue collar workers to purchase their own homes and occasional new cars have all but vanished from the inner city.

Take my uncle Edgar Royster. Though not a college man, he was a provider in the noblest sense of the term. He worked for years at the Winchester arms plant in New Haven and held a second job at Yale University. Both were within walking distance of his home in the Dixwell neighborhood.

Uncle Edgar's earnings enabled his family to save enough money to move out of public housing into a new home that they built in nearby West Haven. They actually lived out the American dream almost exactly as the script was written back then.

Now, the Winchester plant is history, along with the decent-paying jobs that provided access for people like my uncle Edgar to the economic mainstream. Those service jobs that have replaced them often pay so miserably that the full-time employees who hold them still cannot work their way out of poverty.

I recite these global and domestic trends because it's essential that we place our circumstances in a larger context. Yes, racism is still abroad in the land. Though subtler and somewhat less pervasive now, it's still a well-documented and undeniable reality in employment, housing, lending and the like.

Even so, we must not let ourselves and, especially, our children fall into the paranoid trap of thinking that racism accounts for all that plagues us. The global realignment of work and wealth is, if anything, the bigger culprit. We who serve must be clear-eyed about these color-blind economic trends if we're to be genuinely helpful to our folk.

Lest we and our children forget, the civil rights movement was a huge success in many respects. It unquestionably placed those of us with solid educations, ample family support, personal drive and a healthy dose of luck on the up escalator economically.

Yet millions of our people remain stuck on the down escalator, headed nowhere or worse. Their dire circumstances must dwell in our consciences because of the tragic loss of human potential and the mounting drain on societal resources and compassion.

It is their fate, then, that must be the primary focus of the Urban League movement. This renewed emphasis on our sisters and brothers and children in greatest need honors our original mission, which was to serve those of us in meager circumstances who are seeking access to mainstream society.

How will we pursue this ambitious goal? Given our limited resources, we must concentrate with laser-like focus on those critical areas where we can leverage our unique strengths for greatest impact. I see three areas of concentration for the Urban League:

--The first is the education and development of our children growing up in the inner city so that they have the academic and social skills to be successful.

--The second is to enable their families to become economically self-sufficient.

--Finally, we should encourage racial inclusion so that our folk can participate fully in the mainstream economy.

Let me elaborate on each priority. First, and foremost, our children, for all the obvious reasons. How easy it is to forget, in the flood of awful articles and newscasts about youth violence, that they are our future.

Look around you at the 500 smart and committed NULITES students. They, too, are our future, though we seldom read or see anything about them in the media. Let's make certain these young leaders know how much we love and appreciate them by giving them a rousing round of applause.

Children growing up in the inner city are being cheated of many supports that are crucial for their success. The Urban League intends to do something about two of them -- education and social development.

There's little mystery about how to do a better job of educating poor children. School reformers, like James Comer, Jeff Howard, Bob Slavin and Ted Sizer, and dedicated teachers across the country have shown convincingly that it can be done. Among the key ingredients are high expectations, challenging academic material and flexible instructional techniques.

Unfortunately, effective teaching and learning for poor children occurs mostly in isolated classrooms led by motivated teachers. It seldom permeates entire schools and school districts. That's largely because districts still aren't genuinely committed to reform or prepared to invest adequately in retooling teachers and principals to take it on in earnest.

What's missing, therefore, is not the way to change, but the will. It'll take concerted outside pressure from parents and community groups to prevail upon school systems to improve the education of inner-city children.

That's precisely where the Urban League comes in. I see us mobilizing and equipping parents and community leaders to become sophisticated and insistent consumers of education for their children.

Let's go house-by-house, living room-by-living room in the inner-city neighborhoods we serve. Let's help parents understand, in layman's terms, exactly what their children must know and be able to do in order to meet 21st century standards of competency.

If their kids are off course, then encourage them to inquire, constructively yet insistently, exactly what the teachers intend to do about it, by when, and what they, the parents, can do concretely to be supportive.

I repeat. Concerted pressure from sophisticated consumers -- namely parents -- is a major missing ingredient in urban school reform. That's the Urban League's natural niche, our unique contribution to improving the education of our children.

But we cannot stop there. What happens after class is equally important since children spend most of their waking hours outside of school. In the home, of course. But also in extracurricular programs, settlement houses and boys clubs, and organized sports.

Ideally, this is where social development of children occurs. Where their values are shaped. Where they learn to collaborate with others in teams. Where they learn social graces. Where they are exposed to new horizons through visits to museums and such.

That's the theory anyway. The trouble is that in all too many inner-city neighborhoods, this so-called developmental infrastructure has virtually vanished. Many parents these days, especially single moms, are stringing together several low wage jobs just to get by. They simply aren't home in mid-afternoon when their children arrive from school.

Most urban school systems are too strapped financially to provide the rich array of extracurricular clubs that many of us enjoyed as teenagers. Many inner-city settlement houses, assuming they're even still on the scene, are too underfunded and dilapidated physically to provide safe havens and constructive activities for all the children who need them. Municipal park and recreation departments are but a shadow programmatically of their former selves.

But I'll tell you who is well-financed and omnipresent, however. The gangs that are growing everywhere. They've filled the void left by we supposedly responsible adults and have built their own anti-social developmental infrastructure which ensnares youngsters in search of identity and companionship.

Just listen to this chillingly perceptive analysis by a Los Angeles gang leader, one Tee Rogers, of why adolescents join gangs:

What I think is formulating here is that human nature wants to be accepted. A human being gives less of a damn what he is accepted into. At that age -- eleven to seventeen -- all kids want to belong. They are unpeople.

Politicians talk incessantly these days about taking back the streets from criminals. I say we take back our children from the streets and from the gangs, and the streets will take care of themselves.

It's high time that society at large and, especially, we of the African-American community muster the will and the wherewithal to ensure that each inner-city child who needs attention, support and direction has a caring adult in his or her life every day.

We African Americans who have made it must tithe with our time and, more importantly, our money to see to it that those of our children whom the civil rights movement hasn't yet touched also have a real chance to succeed. Volunteer mentors are wonderful. But given their often unpredictable schedules, even the most well-meaning of them aren't reliable enough to provide the continuity of caring needed by these kids.

Let's get right down to cases. I propose that each Urban League affiliate establish a Youth Development Fund and formulate, in conjunction with others in the community, a master plan for delivering youth services after school and over the summer in churches, schools, settlement houses, community centers, safe homes, museums, even National Guard armories.

Mind you, the idea isn't to run our own programs with this money. That would undercut our credibility because people might think it's merely a money grab by us. For the same reason, we probably need a credible, representative panel of community people to disburse the funds. Our goal is to be of service in the broadest sense of the term.

I also see us monitoring the performance of those who receive the funds and connecting contributors with the kids. We should be flexible so that donor groups, like sororities, can retain their identity while giving to the fund.

Where would the money come from? From our young, well-heeled professionals who don't yet have family obligations. From older folk like me whose children are now out of college. From everyone else - - of all races, I hasten to add -- who can afford to give. From those who cannot but are willing to stage fundraisers instead. From groups like the Elks, the frats, and so forth.

How much have I in mind? I belong to a black men's organization, called the Westchester Clubmen. We partner with the White Plains YMCA in providing an after-school program for adolescent African-American boys from the local middle school.

A few Sundays ago, the twenty-five of us put up \$17,000, yes \$17,000, for this year's program. Our grant pays the salaries of the three part-time youth workers who are there with the 17 or so youngsters every weekday afternoon during the school year.

In other words, for a mere \$1,000 annually per child, we can put a caring adult in the daily life of a youngster throughout the school year. Given the frightening realities facing our kids today, how can we afford not to make certain this happens? How can we in good conscience buy that luxury car when a less expensive model would serve our needs plus those of an inner-city youngster as well? Think about it, sisters and brothers.

Our mission, then, is to raise \$500 to \$1000 each year from every African American who can possibly afford it so we can put a caring adult regularly in the life of every child who needs one. If we're successful, we can then turn the tables on the majority community -- business, government and foundations -- and challenge it to match us for a change.

If we personally buy into this prevention strategy, we'll then be in a better position to say to our elected officials who are obsessed with crime, and legitimately so, that there's a smarter way to spend tax dollars to combat it.

Those 100,000 cops we're about to add under the federal anti-crime bill are the rough equivalent, cost-wise, of 300,000 part-time youth workers. Working at a ratio of one of them to every six or seven youngsters, we could, with the same money, put a caring youth worker in the daily lives of 2 million inner-city youngsters.

Which anti-crime strategy -- 100,000 cops or 2 million inner-city kids tended by a caring adult every day -- do you think would work best? I know which bet I'm prepared to place as a taxpayer.

Back now to our own youth development fund. We obviously need an army of fundraisers to extract this money from our folks. My friends, we've actually got one already enlisted in our cause. We simply need to give them new marching orders with the instruction that there is no more important mission for the Urban League. If need be, tell them: "Uncle Hugh wants you -- now."

And who's that standing army, you might ask? It's the 3000 local Urban League board members, the 3000 members of our local guilds, the thousands of other volunteers who pitch in from time to time, the 2000-plus executives in BEEP (the Black Executive Exchange Program), the 500-strong NULITES students and, yes, the thousands of clients we've

helped locally over the years through our training and other programs.

My friends, this mobilization campaign to take back our children from the streets is the manifest destiny of the Urban League movement. Who else has the credibility and the capacity and the connections to pull it off all across the country? If not us, then who? If not now, when? Our children urgently await our answer.

Let me turn now to our second focus area -- economic self-sufficiency for poor families. As I said earlier, the economies of cities have undergone profound changes which have undermined the ability of marginally skilled and low skilled workers of all races adequately to support their families.

Just a generation ago, these blue collar workers were the backbone of the American economy, and celebrated in the media as such. With the destruction of their livelihoods has come the rapid deterioration of their neighborhoods, the onset of despair, the break-up of families whose fathers can no longer be proud providers like my Uncle Edgar, the escalation of violent crime, and the ascendancy of the code of the streets.

Make no mistake, it's all of a piece. Each breakdown begets or exacerbates another. To break the cycle, we must go back to the source of the problem, namely the growing inability of inner-city adults to find legitimate jobs that enable their families to live in dignity with a decent standard of living.

Marvelous as the market economy works for most Americans, it has all but collapsed for inner-city folk. There are fewer and fewer jobs for low skilled workers, especially males. And the wages for those jobs that exist are just plain lousy, all too often at or below the poverty line.

In my view, many politicians and economists are in denial about the depth of this problem. Some blame its victims, saying they don't want to work anyway, despite convincing evidence to the contrary.

Others say high unemployment and low wages for low skilled workers are the natural order of things in modern market economies and that government ought not interfere. Still others argue, optimistically, that there will be a happy ending when technology eventually replaces the lost jobs with more highly skilled and highly paid new ones.

The trouble is that none of these scenarios holds out much hope for inner-city people trapped in poverty today. It's unrealistic to expect all of them to

upgrade themselves overnight from laborers and welfare recipients to office workers and small entrepreneurs.

Yet society these days expects everyone to support themselves. And the poor, not unreasonably, expect work to be worthwhile economically. Otherwise, why bother? Only the independently wealthy toil for therapeutic reasons alone.

Government invests lots of money in job training, but largely avoids the ideologically uncomfortable question of whether the market economy is actually creating enough jobs for everyone in the inner city who wants to or is expected to work.

The Urban League will join this crucial issue at several levels. Our bottom line goal, as Brother Herman Ewing of Memphis puts it, is to help dependent people become independently productive. Obviously we must continue our successful job training and placement programs. We'll also encourage entrepreneurship education for our young people and economic development for African-American firms. In this vein, we welcome our partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration, which has the Small Business Resource Center here.

We will pressure private and public employers to cut poor people in on the local job action, so that everyone has a shared stake in the overall community's quality of life. For instance, what if employers reserved training slots and real jobs for residents of neighborhoods or census tracts with high unemployment rates.

The way I see it, this wouldn't be a politically contentious race-based approach. Instead, it's a more palatable alternative which recognizes that poor people of all races need decent jobs.

But even these local measures may not be enough to employ everyone. There simply may be no alternative to government action if legitimate work is to be reintroduced as the prevailing way of life in poor neighborhoods.

I call upon government to create a new labor-intensive public enterprise to perform services valued by taxpayers. We taxpayers all know there's plenty of infrastructure work to do. Schools are crumbling. Subway and bus stations are strewn with graffiti and railroad rights-of-way are littered with trash. Public parks in cities and suburbs alike are poorly maintained.

Critics of governments jobs programs usually say it's the private sector's responsibility to create jobs. I agree in principle. But when the private labor market comes up woefully short, as it does today in the inner city, then government must step in if people are to work.

How quickly we forget in this post-Perestroika era that the military once was what I've just proposed -- a labor-intensive public enterprise employing thousands of marginally skilled workers who helped produce goods and services -- namely the national defense -- that taxpayers really wanted.

Let's elevate America's infrastructure to the same valued status and alleviate urban unemployment in the bargain. What's several billion in new public dollars invested in schools, parks and people when compared with the billions more now spent much less productively on public assistance for the able-bodied and extra policemen and prisons?

That brings me to my third and final focus area -- helping our racially diverse society work more harmoniously. Belief in racial inclusion goes to the marrow of my bones. My great, great grandfather was a slave named George Latimer. He escaped from his master in Virginia. Latimer fled to Massachusetts,

where white abolitionists rallied around him and prevented his recapture.

The incident inspired John Greenleaf Whittier to write a poem about it, entitled "From Massachusetts to Virginia." By the way, Latimer was the father of the celebrated inventor, Lewis Latimer, and the grandfather of the cousin I mentioned earlier, Winifred Norman, who is the goddaughter of Eugene Kinckle Jones.

I fully understand the instinct to separate when we are incessantly under economic siege. When we're still discriminated against some forty years after the Brown decision. And when, thanks to those recurring images on evening newscasts of black youngsters being hauled off to jail, even our honor students are trailed like common thieves when they enter stores.

Even so, it's suicidal economically to become so bitter that we isolate ourselves from others. America is a robustly multicultural society. So is its labor market. For example, I read recently of a small manufacturing firm in Southern California which has 200 workers representing 30 nationalities. That's the new U.S. labor market. We deny this reality at our -- and our children's -- peril.

For all our suffering, we cannot become so fixated on our problems that we ignore our commonality of interest with others. All of the problems I've addressed this evening --inadequate schooling, idle and alienated youngsters, and chronic unemployment -- cut across racial lines. If we're ever to deal with them on a scale remotely equal to their size, we must coalesce with people of other complexions who feel the same pain, even if it isn't yet as acute.

For instance, the expanded Earned Income Tax Credit and, soon I hope, universal health would never happen were they seen solely as our issues. Yet both are of enormous benefit to our people.

Whites of all religions have oppressed us at one time or another. Mormons, Catholics, Jews, Episcopalians, Baptists. We've even been oppressed by our own on occasion. It's a form of reverse racism to single out any specific group of whites for vilification.

Many whites of good will have accompanied us on our long journey for racial, social and economic justice. None has matched the Jewish community as long distance runners in the civil rights movement.

Just as we denounce misleading media stereotypes of African-Americans, it is morally repugnant as well to impugn an entire people, especially long-standing allies, like Jews, because of the unconscionable behavior of some of them.

What constructive purpose is served by driving deeper wedges between races? Of course we must root out any vestiges of racism. But let's not wallow forever in real or perceived grievances lest we become Bosnia some day.

I say, let's get on with making our gloriously multicultural society work. If Nelson Mandela and F.W. DeKlerk can bury the hatchets of hatred and oppression in the sand, instead of one another's heads, and get on with South Africa's future, then surely so can we.

At the same time, our allies should understand that serious-minded African Americans must be free to discuss the acute pain afflicting our community. Even if that means conferring with those with whom we vehemently disagree on other issues.

Dialoguing, even arguing, with those who hold abhorrent views is difficult yet sometimes necessary. Otherwise, opposing sides remain at loggerheads to the detriment of progress. How would U.S. relations

with arch-enemy China ever have been normalized had Richard Nixon never met with Mao Tse Tong?

Would there ever have been a Camp David accord had Begin refused to dialogue with Sadat? Did Yitzhak Rabin compromise his moral integrity by meeting with Yassar Arafat as a prelude to today's Middle East peace? Would apartheid ever have ended had Mandela adamantly refused to negotiate with his people's brutal and hated oppressors?

As Churchill once said, "it's better to jaw, jaw, than to war, war." The time-honored role of the Urban League is to build bridges, not just between poverty and plenty, but between peoples of all races and persuasions.

The challenges I've outlined tonight are formidable. But seeing the thousands of Urban League faithful out there and feeling the energy emanating from you, I'm even more confident than when I took office that we're equal to them.

Why am I optimistic? Because Americans are beginning to see the connection between the nation's economic competitiveness and their own quality of life, on the one hand, and the decline of cities and the persistence of urban poverty, on the other.

They're finally connecting the dots between these phenomena. That's due in no small part to a President and First Lady who really understand and genuinely care about these issues, about our issues. That's a rare and welcome combination in elected officials these days.

I see a greater sense of shared risk, which is the necessary prelude to shared responsibility for finding solutions to our problems. And there's a growing sense that the social compact between society and the individual needs strengthening on both sides.

One side defines what people owe society -- personal responsibility, nurturing their children, supporting themselves and their families, and abiding by society's laws. The other side defines what society owes its citizens -- the opportunity to be self-reliant and protection from anarchy at home and invasion from abroad.

In recent decades, important elements of both sides of the social compact have eroded due to the profound economic changes sweeping the developed world, including our own country.

Many individuals are shirking responsibility and wreaking havoc on fellow citizens. Meanwhile, society has reneged on its obligation of providing

reasonable access to opportunity for all. The result is the chaos we now see in cities.

We of the Urban League must work with our own in restoring personal responsibility -- taking family obligations, child-rearing, education, self-reliance and citizenship seriously.

But society must update and then uphold its end of the bargain. What use is talk of opportunity when poor people see so little of it? The social compact must be revised so that self-reliance, with dignity and a decent standard of living, is an everyday reality instead of empty rhetoric.

To pursue the ambitious agenda I've outlined tonight, the Urban League must become a force to be reckoned with, not merely another minority face at the table.

That means reinvigorating and focusing our movement for maximum effectiveness. That means creating a state-of-the-art organization that's equipped today for the 21st century.

That means speaking once again with the authority that derives from our own research, our own innovative yet realistic ideas, and our own thorough critiques of the policies and approaches of others.

And that means backing our intellectual credibility with the clout of a vast network of influential and effective affiliates which are deeply rooted in their communities.

This is a tall order, but I'm absolutely confident that we're equal to it. Why? Because of the firm foundation that you in this vast audience have built over 84 years of service to our folk. Because of our unparalleled strengths -- a proud history, a treasured household name, a terrific track record, a vast army of volunteers, and an affiliate network that delivers the goods every day for our people.

I'm often asked in interviews whether the Urban League has lost touch, whether we're relevant any longer to the needs of ordinary, as opposed to affluent, African Americans. What's my reply?

Just come with me, I say, to Africa Square Park in Liberty City and listen to T. Willard Fair tell you how the Miami Urban League recaptured that park from drug dealers and transformed it into a safe haven for children, complete with constructive programs after school and over the summer.

Come to Memphis and talk, as I did, to the public housing mother of five who told me how she's on her way to economic self-sufficiency thanks to the Urban League's Skill Center training.

Come with me to the Chicago Urban League to see Jim Compton's impressive research department which prepared the definitive state-wide study of school finance inequities that cheat poor children of better educations.

That's the impressive and relevant work that skeptics would see in the field today were they actually to take a look.

Still, to those of us in this remarkable and respected movement, I say, that's great, but not yet good enough. Together we must take the Urban League to an entirely new plateau of effectiveness and impact for our people.

That's "the something more important" that my daughter predicted I was being saved for. That is your charge to me as I take office. And that is my challenge to you tonight. That is the manifest destiny of this great movement.

Ladies and gentlemen, it's time we get on with our calling. Let this 84th Annual Conference of the Urban League begin.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 11, 1994

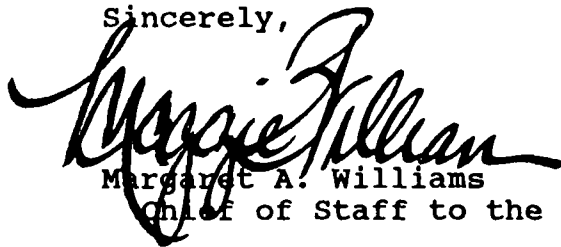
Eileen Pullen
11800 Breton Court #12B
Reston, VA 22090

Dear Ms. Pullen,

Thank you for your letter of encouragement regarding the article in the October issue of Essence Magazine. I apologize for the delay in sending a response, but thousands of wonderful individuals like yourself have taken the initiative to write in to express their thoughts and concerns on a number of issues. I am trying to respond to each and every person.

Again, thank you for your thoughtful letter. Words of inspirational encouragement are always a joy to me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Margie Williams".

Margaret A. Williams
Chief of Staff to the First Lady

*Your letter meant so much
to me.*

*Diane
Please draft
Nice
Reply*

September 24, 1995

Ms Margaret Williams
Office of the First Lady
The White House
Room 1000
Old Executive Office Bldg
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Ms Williams:

I have just finished reading the article written about you in the October issue of Essence Magazine.

I wanted to let you know how much I appreciated seeing another woman of color making a difference in this great country.

I have lived in the Washington D.C area for three years. There is no city like it. This city has many gifts to offer for all people. However, every day When I turn on the radio watch the news and read the newspaper there is only negative information about people of color in this area.

My thirteen year old daughter sees and receives the same messages each day. We were both grateful to see that with this administration, a lot of the negative imaging is starting to change.

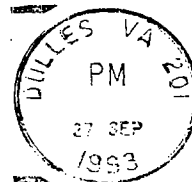
Our young people are our future. I commend you for taking the time, the energy and effort to work so hard in giving our young ones a goal to shoot for.

God Bless You.

Sincerely,

Eileen Pullen

Eileen Puller
11800 Breton Court #12B
Reston, Virginia 22090



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