

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 29, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE FILE

BY: John R. Price *JRP*

SUBJECT: Meeting of the President with Daniel P. Moynihan  
and John R. Price on October 24, 1969

The President opened, following up a conversation he had obviously had earlier with Dr. Moynihan, especially about an idea of Secretary Hickel's. He said that he wanted us to move with these areas of pollution and recreation in both the national parks and parks in cities. On pollution, the cleaning up of waters and lakes is not going to take just millions. All the talk is to go from \$600 million to \$900 million, and so forth. "To do the job is going to take billions." He said that he wanted us to think of long-range goals in this and other areas.

He mentioned that many in the Cabinet do not think this way, and then he noted, "You know, I had made up my mind about Family Assistance three months before I announced my decision." We both acknowledged that we knew that. "And," he added, "don't underestimate the role that John Ehrlichman played in this." We said that we had not at all.

He then said that the purpose had been to have a debate which would give people time to grasp what it was we were trying to do--a long period of debate, which he said he thought was good. He then said that the Camp David Cabinet Meeting had been historic. "We broke the backs of some of the Cabinet, but they came around."

The President then said, "We don't do an adequate job of sloganing. While it can be a subterfuge for not acting, it can often be a gate."

He said that he thought that "Family Security" was a good slogan, but, "We couldn't go with it for reasons you know. 'Family Assistance' is, as you know, blah." He said that he wanted Dr. Moynihan to think about the development of slogans and work with Bill Safire on it, who is good at this sort of thing.

He then returned to the themes of pollution, recreation, and New Cities, although he added that he was not quite so sure about the last one. He said that it is a new concept that we must be looking for--perhaps even a new Bill of Rights, such as the right to read, or the right to do other things. But, he stressed, "Don't make it just material." He said that the concept of "freedom from" was good--that Franklin Roosevelt had, of course, used it. Dr. Moynihan and his "bright young men down there" were to "put their minds" to thinking this through.

He said that "this is the most revolutionary social program since Woodrow Wilson." He felt that the New Deal dealt with different problems and said, "You know, the reason Hubert Humphrey lost the election--well, one of the main reasons anyway--was that he was the last of the New Deal." He said, "What is needed today in this country is the excitement of being part of a great movement. It's been two generations since the New Deal."

He again urged that Dr. Moynihan and his bright young men think these questions over and come up with something which will seize the imagination. "Don't worry about the money. Or the implementation. Dr. Burns will find the money. Just think."

He indicated that he wanted ideas before January first.