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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 16, 1982

attached
File
Religious Care

Northwest Interfaith Movement
Greene and Westview
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19119

Dear Clergy:

Thank you for your letter regarding the April 13 meeting held by the President's Task Force on Private Sector Initiatives.

Unfortunately, the information you had regarding the President's meeting with 128 national religious leaders was incorrect. The purpose was not, as your letter states, "to inform them of your plans to drastically reduce federal funds for the poor and needy." In fact, the President specifically rejected that concept in his remarks, a copy of which is enclosed.

attached
sent out

I doubt many clergy or laymen would disagree with the thrust of the President's statement: "I just believe it would be a good thing for the soul of this country to encourage people to get involved and accept more direct responsibility for one another's health, happiness and well being, rather than leaving it to the bureaucracy."

The purpose of the meeting was to give national religious leaders an opportunity to exchange information about their respective, successful community service programs. To the best of our information, this was the first time any President has invited the leaders of all major, national religious organizations to the White House.

At the April 13 meeting, one leader raised the point that there might be a perception that the President was suggesting that the churches "take up the slack" caused by budget reductions in some spending areas. In response the President again specifically rejected that view.

Many of the leaders present, then and later, have expressed their strong approval of the meeting. The general view has been that it was entirely appropriate for the President to encourage leadership in this important area.

Many religious leaders have written to us outlining the increased activities they have undertaken as a direct result of the President's encouragement.

As you may know, the President had similar meetings with business leaders and heads of secular service organizations.

I would hope, despite any disagreements you may have with aspects of the President's budget proposals, you would agree that encouraging voluntary community service programs is a worthwhile effort at this or any other time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Morton C. Blackwell". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Morton C. Blackwell
Special Assistant to
the President



May 12, 1982

The Honorable Ronald Reagan
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

You have come to our city at a time of grave crisis and deep human suffering. Nearly 100,000 of our people are unemployed, and the number grows each day. Our congregations and denominational offices carry on a wide variety of efforts on behalf of the poor, unemployed, and elderly. It is not enough. In fact, Mr. President, there never was any real possibility that the religious community and other private agencies could replace the role of the federal government in providing income assistance to the poor or supplemental food to families and children. Their numbers are too large and our resources too small. While precise numbers are impossible, it is our general calculation that there will be a reduction of \$158,000,000 (\$158 million) in a wide variety of human services in Philadelphia in Fiscal Year 1983. That would require each of the approximately 1631 religious congregations in Philadelphia to raise over \$96,000 in order to replace the human service and entitlement cuts you are proposing.

Mr. President, your program for America was based on the belief that larger spending for military weapons would make our people secure. To that end, you have pared \$40 Billion from human services and you have proposed to make further reductions. You also reduced taxes for businesses so they would reinvest their funds to modernize our factories. What the long lines in Philadelphia at our unemployment offices and community food cupboards mean is that your program is not making people secure. It is not working.

In this city, more people are hungry today than any of us have ever seen before. Many factories have closed permanently. Some companies, like U. S. Steel, have bought oil companies instead of modernizing their mills. We know, both from pastoral experience and academic studies, that the present conditions will increase crime, mental hospital admissions, suicide rates, and family abuse. We know that you must know that the heaviest burden of this new wave of human misery falls heaviest on minorities and the elderly.

On April 13, 1982, you invited 150 national religious leaders to the White House to inform them of your plans to drastically reduce federal funds for the poor and needy. In that meeting, you asked them to support your policies by developing new and expanded programs and services on behalf of the poor, and in that context you

- continued -

The Honorable Ronald Reagan
President of the United States
May 12, 1982

reminded them of the parable of the Good Samaritan. We grant the profound value of that parable, but we also remind you of its beginning, which says that a certain man "fell among robbers who stripped him and beat him and left him half-dead by the side of the road." Mr. President, your fast-growing military budget is like those robbers. It has stripped the people of this city, decreasing available jobs, and leaving them without support for their families and their children.

We are saddened and outraged at these developments. We urge you to restore human service and human needs expenditures to the 1981 (plus inflation) levels. We believe that our peril lies not in some enemy across distant oceans and continents, but in the decay and despair now filling our cities. The prophet Isaiah called us to "bring forth justice" and to "repair the ruined cities." That is a program we could support with our whole hearts. In the meantime, we face the despair of our people, who suffer the neglect of our own government.

Signed by more than one hundred
Philadelphia clergy - list attached

/vmk

DOLLAR LOSSES TO THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA AS PROPOSED IN THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION'S 1983 BUDGET (These figures were derived from and corroborated by a variety of City and federal sources during the week of April 26, 1982):

CATEGORY

Low Income Energy Assistance	\$ 4,200,000
CETA (Job Training)	14,600,000
Legal Services	2,400,000
Food Stamps	37,900,000
Child Nutrition	1,600,000
Aid to Families with Dependent Children	32,900,000
Medicaid (Low Income Medical Assistance)	27,000,000
Public Housing Operating Assistance	12,500,000
Community Development Block Grants	10,200,000
Social Services (Title 20)	9,600,000
Public Education (Title I - Low Income)	6,000,000
	<hr/>
Total	\$ 158,000,000

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 CONGREGATIONS IN THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

Metropolitan Christian Council of Philadelphia, Member Congregations	515
Archdiocese of Philadelphia (Roman Catholic)	137
Synagogues	54
Black Baptist Congregations	500
African Methodist Episcopal	41
Apostolic	45
Assemblies of God	12
Pentecostal	95
Jehovah's Witnesses	36
Holiness Churches	32
Fundamental Churches	18
Non-Denominational/Non-Sectarian	41
Unitarian/Universalist	3
Seventh Day Adventists	15
Other Denominations	87
	<hr/>
	1,631

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 Dollar Loss (\$158,000,000) divided by number of Congregations (1,631)
 equals: \$96,873 per congregation

NAMES OF CLERGY SIGNING THE OPEN LETTER TO PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN,
MAY 13, 1982 (FOR RELEASE APRIL 13, 1982)

The Rev. J. B. Adams
Rabbi Joel Alpert
Rabbi Rebecca Alpert
The Rev. George Alt
The Rev. Lavonne Althouse
The Rev. Paul A. Andell
The Rev. Sidney Barnes
The Rev. Michele Bartlow
The Rev. Van S. Bird
The Rev. Hugh Blair
The Rev. Walter D. Bowen
The Rev. Alpheus L. Bright
The Rev. Martin L. Bupp II
The Rev. Hubert L. Burkat
The Rev. Susan Cady
The Rev. Albert F. Campbell
The Rev. Michael Carlson
The Rev. David Cassie
The Rev. Charles D. Chapman, Jr.
The Rev. Michael Cobbler
The Rev. C. Richard Cox
The Rev. Wesley Crowther
The Rev. Rendell Davis
The Rev. Donna Day-Lower
The Rev. David M. Deal
Rabbi Morris Dembowitz
The Rev. Maurine Doggett
The Rev. Stuart Dunlap
The Rev. Daniel Ellis-Killian
The Rev. August Englert
The Rev. Richard R. Fernandez
The Rev. Dorothy M. Field
The Rev. Wallace N. Fletcher
The Rev. Edwin Flexer
The Rev. Dean Foose
The Rev. William J. Gardiner
The Rev. C. Edward Geiger
The Rev. Mary Glasspool
The Rev. Barnabas W. Glenn
The Rev. David M. Gracie
The Rev. Frank T. Griswold
The Rev. Richard P. Grove
Rabbi Sanford H. Hahn
The Rev. John Hardwick
The Rev. Robert W. Hill
The Rev. Arthur Honore
The Rev. Carol Rose Ikler
The Rev. Joseph F. Irvin
The Rev. Fredric Jenkins
The Rev. Richard L. Johnson
The Rev. Thomas E. Kadel
The Rev. David C. Koch
The Rev. Brian Kopke
The Rev. Alfred Krass
The Rev. Karl Krueger
The Rev. Peter Leathersich
The Rev. John F. Leser
The Rev. Heather Little-Andrade
The Rev. Mark Livermore
The Rev. Thomas W. S. Logan, Sr.
The Rev. Robert Longenecker
The Rev. Ronald G. Lutz
The Rev. Joan Martin
The Rev. Elizabeth McDonald
The Rev. James McDonald
The Rev. Thomas McClellan
The Rev. Charles Harvey McClung
The Rev. Francis Menna
The Rev. Larry Miller
The Rev. James Moodey
The Rev. Ralph Moore
The Rev. William B. Moore
The Rev. William J. Murphey, Jr.
The Rev. Henry H. Nichols
The Rev. Graham Patterson
The Rev. William H. Pindar
The Rev. Charles Poindexter
The Rev. Richard H. Price
The Rev. James Ransom
The Rev. Ronald Reed
The Rev. John H. Rice
The Rev. Richard Rock
The Rev. Kenneth Ross
The Rev. Edward Saling
The Rev. Albert Sanders
The Rev. Donald P. Scott
The Rev. John M. Scott
The Rev. Marillyn Schultz-Rothermel
The Rev. Michael Schultz-Rothermel
The Rev. Thomas M. Scott
The Rev. Richard Shaw
The Rev. Warren E. Shaw
The Rev. William J. Shaw
The Rev. J. Barrie Shepherd
The Rev. Gordon E. Simmons
The Rev. John A. Smart
The Rev. H. W. Stevens
The Rev. Barnard M. Tracey
The Rev. James A. Trimble
The Rev. Paul M. Washington
The Rev. Tom Weir
The Rev. Walter Wieder
The Rev. Jeanne B. Williams
The Rev. James B. Wright
The Rev. Theophilus Wright
The Rev. William R. Yeats
The Rev. Roger Zepernick



Interfaith Conference
of Metropolitan Washington

**A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE
INTERFAITH CONFERENCE OF METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON**

WHAT IS THE INTERFAITH CONFERENCE (IFC)?

The Interfaith Conference is the meeting ground for four major faith communities of the metropolitan area -- Protestant, Catholic, Jewish and Islamic -- to dialogue on shared concerns and to work together on critical issues facing the metropolitan area. Here a cardinal, bishops, ministers, rabbis, imams and key lay leaders meet together to find ways to effectively express the religious communities' concern for the quality of life in our community.

OFFICERS:

The Most Rev. Eugene A. Marino
President
Imam Khalil Abdel Alim
First Vice-President
Archbishop James A. Hickey
Vice-President
Bishop Nathaniel Linsey
Vice-President
Rabbi Eugene J. Lipman
Vice-President
The Rev. H. Wesley Wiley
Secretary
The Rev. Bryce Shoemaker
Treasurer
The Rev. Clark Lobenstine
Executive Director

ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP:

The Rev. Canon Lloyd Casson
Chairman
Dr. James Langley
Vice-Chairman
Dr. Michael Berenbaum
Secretary
Ms. Jamilah Ansari
Rabbi Andrew Baker
The Rev. Gabriel Duffy
The Rev. Ernest R. Gibson
The Rev. Charles Helton
The Rev. Sean O'Malley
Imam Rajee Abdur Rashid
The Rev. Edward A. White

The Most Rev. Eugene A. Marino
President
The Rt. Rev. John T. Walker
Past President

The Interfaith Conference is believed to be the first organization of its kind in the United States to bring together such diversity of religious leadership in a staffed organization focusing both on dialogue and on metropolitan issues. It grows out of a rich heritage of more than a decade of cooperation among Protestants, Catholics and Jews, in such organizations as the Metropolitan Ecumenical Training Center, the Interreligious Association, and the Interfaith Committee of Greater Washington.

Our logo represents our unity -- that as Christians, Jews and Muslims, we are all people of The Book who share some common scriptures together.

HOW DOES THE IFC ACCOMPLISH ITS WORK?

Our interfaith dialogue provides opportunities for deepened understanding of the unique elements of each of our faiths as well as of those aspects that unite us. The dialogue also brings us together in mutual understanding with those who are not a part of the IFC at this time.

Our work on critical issues will be characterized by (1) a focus on the metropolitan aspects of a problem or need, for we are one community; (2) reflection on the theological and ethical rationale for the involvement of the religious community; (3) defining specific recommendations for needed changes in public policy; (4) advocacy for those policy changes by key religious leaders in our community; and (5) monitoring the implementation of those recommended changes.

Priorities for the IFC's task forces are: aging, employment, housing, and hunger. In addition, the IFC provides an interfaith basis for work already being staffed by others through IFC action committees in the areas of criminal justice, the DC full voting rights amendment, and international peace and justice.

over, please

1419 V Street, N.W., • Washington, D.C. 20009 • (202) 234-6300

The Interfaith Conference works through the top leaders of its member faith communities—Islamic, Jewish, Protestant and Roman Catholic—in interfaith dialogue and united work on critical issues facing our metropolitan area.

WHAT IS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW THE IFC WORKS?

In the spring of 1979, the Interfaith Conference decided to respond to the tragically high infant mortality rate in the District of Columbia. After carefully researching the issue, it held a major public hearing with twenty key witnesses sharing testimony before IFC religious leaders. Recommendations for policy changes and programs we believe are essential to effectively combat the highest infant mortality rate in the country have been developed and were adopted by the IFC Assembly in September. They will be shared by its leaders with the Mayor and other appropriate persons and organizations. A summary of the testimony of the hearing has been prepared which is helpful to many persons working on, or interested in, this issue. Additional research on specific aspects of this issue and continued monitoring of responses to our recommendations will be done. IFC staff are also working in coalition with others on this issue. Although the IFC normally addresses issues that have an impact on the whole metropolitan area, it has also responded to significant needs in one part of that jurisdiction. Our work on infant mortality is an example of this.

WHO SUPPORTS THE INTERFAITH CONFERENCE?

The administrative budget of the IFC is raised by the pledges of the Protestant, Catholic, Jewish and Islamic faith communities. These pledges in turn are made possible by funds from faith groups (i.e. denominations, judicatories, conventions, religious organizations). Each faith group sends its elected or appointed religious leader to the Assembly which meets three times a year. Contributions from individuals and businesses as well as grants are utilized for expenses of the work of the IFC in the critical metropolitan issues indicated above.

WHAT CAN A CONCERNED INDIVIDUAL, GROUP, OR CONGREGATION DO TO HELP?

Involvement can take many forms. Your regular prayers for this unique and challenging work are requested. Persons can represent their faith group on a task force or action committee. Many IFC recommendations on a particular issue can be studied and acted upon in local congregations and neighborhoods. Your initiative is needed to make this happen. If you know of work being done relating to one of our areas of concern, please let us know -- there may be fruitful ways of working together. Individuals or congregations interested in interfaith dialogue are encouraged to call us. Financial contributions are needed for the work of our task forces. Volunteers are needed periodically for special projects, for research, or for assisting in our office. Please call Rev. Clark Lobenstine, Executive Director, if you have any questions, suggestions, or offers to help!



June 30, 1982

Mr. Morton C. Blackwell
Special Assistant to the President
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Blackwell:

As the Director of the Northwest Interfaith Movement, I want to thank you for taking the time to respond to our letter to the President and to send along the full text of Mr. Reagan's remarks.

As a churchperson, let me begin with this confession: The religious community does not now nor has it ever, as far as I know, responded as fully as it might in regard to the poor. When one simply considers the billions of dollars in religious buildings, investments, and liquid assets, there is no hiding from the stark truth that is everywhere to see--in spite of our enormous wealth a pittance is used on behalf of the poor.

President Reagan should not, however, take heart from this confession. The President doesn't expect the religious community to divest itself of investments to feed the poor, or refinance its houses of worship to retrain American workers. In his message of April 13, 1982, he asked church and synagogue leaders to do more in much the same way these institutions have been "doing" since their inception.

So, given the modest dimensions in which the President spoke in regard to the religious community doing "more", there was little room to err. Indeed, all of the cogent examples the President alluded to have taken place within Philadelphia several times over in the past decade. I suspect this to be true in any major metropolitan community in the United States.

That the religious community has done and continues to do more is to be affirmed. With the President, I'd agree that more is yet to be done.

That, Mr. Blackwell, is my confession.

Next I turn to my dilemma. It is my view that too frequently the religious community, government at all levels, and foundations have been involved in programs that seem more like handouts than in programs that empower the poor to claim a future beyond poverty. If poverty is, in part, the absence of choices, then many poor people are and will remain poor because few agencies and institutions seriously seek or enable empowerment strategies.

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f. De
Please get my memo's exchange of letters with Kennedy attached

Mr. Morton C. Blackwell
The White House

June 30, 1982
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This means, Mr. Blackwell, that the President is speaking a half truth when he maintains that the old ways of aiding and assisting the poor have not worked. Mr. Reagan suggests we need to rely more on state and municipal governments to deal with the problems. There is no evidence that state and municipal governments will do better than has the federal government and, worse, the inequities between states that "care" and those that "care less" will force more migration out of the South and Sun Belt.

My dilemma, you see, is not just Mr. Reagan's proposals vis-a-vis the poor. It is the almost fifty years of buildup of structures of dependency that, in the main, were never intended to erase poverty.

In the short run the President, if he were serious about ridding the nation of poverty (which in significant measure is a possibility), would begin to address-- in a substantive way--the issues of job retraining, full employment, and equity within the nation's tax structure. These three issues are fundamental in regard to the poverty question.

What the President has chosen to do instead is to cut back on funds for the country's neediest, and suggest that states and local municipalities do better and the private sector do more.

This brings me beyond my confession and dilemma to outrage at the President's callous attempt to persuade religious leaders and others that the "truly needy" are and will be taken care of by his caring proposals. I am too young to wish to become cynical about our system of government, but Mr. Reagan tempts my best instincts.

Mr. Blackwell, Mr. Reagan's plan is quite simple: Given all of our economic stress we will fight inflation and, in time, that will affect unemployment positively. We will feed the defense budget to be sure the communists do not rule the world. The poor? Well, we'll cut federal spending in this area, admonish others to do better and more, and, in time, the lot of the poor will be better. Why will it be better? Because as the nation gets healthier all around, it is only common sense to see that a rising tide lifts all the ships.

Even at its best, the Reagan-Gilder-Kemp-Stockman world has no intention of getting better soon for the poor. Why didn't the President say that to the religious leaders?

--continued--


Mr. Morton C. Blackwell
The White House

June 30, 1982
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Some of the President's severest critics have said he has been a man of his word, from his early candidacy to his present time in office. Where was his honesty on April 13, 1982?

Well, the night is getting long and I'm more depressed than when I began--angry is a better word. Tomorrow I go back to work on issues of unemployment, plant closings, and the like. I do so in the faith that millions of Americans reject Reverend Jerry Falwell's belief, which - by a wide variety of policy decisions - the President seems to share, that "material wealth is God's way of blessing people who put Him first."

Sincerely yours,



Richard R. Fernandez
Director *rmk*

RRF/vmk

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Rabbi Eugene J. Lipman
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Rev. Charles J. Wallace, Jr.

PAGE two
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Baltimore City, MD 21043

Rev. Sam Cherian
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Arlington, VA 22203

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Bishop Eugene Marino
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Centro Catolico Hispano
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Luther Place Mem Church
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Rev. Richard A. Berry
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Captain's Cove, MD 20022

Bishop Papken Varjabedian
Armenian Orthodox Church
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ADDITIONAL NAMES - Religious leaders who are not members of
the Interfaith Conference

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1625 13th St., NW
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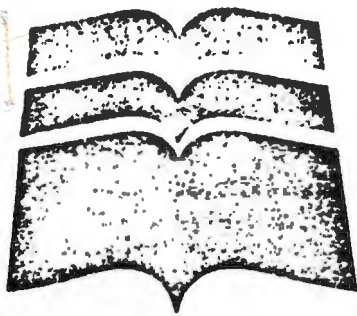
Rev. Dr. Arthur R. McKay
New York Avenue Presbyterian Church
1313 New York Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20005

Rev. G. Ray Coleman
John Wesley AME Zion Church
1324 Q st., NW
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Dr. Robert Pruitt
Metropolitan AME Church
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Washington, D.C. 20005

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Archdiocese of Washington
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of Metropolitan Washington

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Archbishop James A. Hickey
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The Rev. Sean O'Malley
Imam Rajee Abdur Rashid
The Rev. Edward A. White

The Most Rev. Eugene A. Marino
President
The Rt. Rev. John T. Walker
Past President

Monday, June 15, 1981

Dear Clergy:

The Interfaith Conference has been deeply concerned over the impacts of the proposed cuts and changes in the Federal budget for the year that begins this October 1. As we have wrestled with the issues raised in the budgeting process, a central theme has stood out:

Is Charity to become a substitute for Justice?

The enclosed statement of the Interfaith Conference (IFC) shares our understanding from our varied faith traditions. As you may know, the IFC brings together the Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish and Muslim faith communities for interfaith dialogue and for joint work on critical issues facing the metropolitan Washington area.

The Interfaith Conference hopes that this statement will be an educational and pastoral tool that is helpful to you in your work as a leader of your congregation and in your community. It is therefore being mailed to you before being released to the news media on Wednesday, June 17. We would value a partnership with you as we face together a very difficult and challenging period ahead.

Enclosed with your statement is a page of some suggested actions for clergy and congregations. Also you will find a background page on the budgeting process, the block grants, and the local impact of these proposed cuts. We hope that these are also of real value to you. Feel free to reproduce any of this material; just note its source, please. Your comments and ideas would be most welcome.

Faithfully,

+ Eugene A. Marino, SSJ

The Most Rev. Eugene A. Marino, SSJ
President, the Interfaith Conference
Auxiliary Bishop, Archdiocese of
Washington

1419 V Street, N.W., • Washington, D.C. 20009 • (202) 234-6300

The Interfaith Conference works through the top leaders of its member faith communities—Islamic, Jewish, Protestant and Roman Catholic—in interfaith dialogue and united work on critical issues facing our metropolitan area.

Yousef

*File
Interfaith
Conf*

A STATEMENT OF THE
INTERFAITH CONFERENCE
OF METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON

CHARITY - A SUBSTITUTE FOR JUSTICE???

"I don't believe that there is any entitlement, any basic right to legal services or any other kind of services." This statement by a high-ranking member of the national Administration, if accepted as public policy, would in effect relieve the Federal government of the responsibility for justice as it relates to fundamental rights such as the basic necessities of food, shelter, employment, education, health care and essential social services. It also suggests that even the programs in the "safety net" do not stem from a commitment to fundamental rights.

As religious leaders of the Protestant, Catholic, Jewish and Muslim faith communities, we know in faith that all human beings are endowed with an essential human dignity that is to be protected by these fundamental rights. Rights are not matters of privilege or choice. They place a direct responsibility on society and more specifically on government.

We understand "right" to include not all human needs or all desirable social services, but those basic necessities and essentials that are required for life with a minimum of human decency and without which basic human development and dignity are impossible. The Declaration of Independence states succinctly:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights governments are instituted among men...."

The changes in the conception of the role of government in insuring the general welfare of its people, coupled with statements that the religious community should undertake that responsibility, suggest that the Administration believes religious institutions can fill the very large gaps caused by budget cuts in basic social service, health and education programs. Religious institutions have historically been involved in these ways with the poor and will

continue to do so, but religious institutions cannot pick up all those who will fall through the holes created by the Administration's budget cuts.

The goal of the national economy should be to provide every able-bodied adult with the opportunity for meaningful employment sufficiently remunerative to secure, at the very least, the minimal necessities required in our society for living in decency and dignity. However, when the basic necessities of some citizens are not met through the normal workings of the economy and social system, the government has the ultimate responsibility to intervene and provide the necessary helping programs. It is the role of government to protect the fundamental rights of all its people by seeing to it that no one goes without the basic necessities of life.

As leaders of our religious communities we are prepared, as religious institutions have historically been prepared, to work in partnership with the social institutions of this country to help those in need. But we know all too well that we cannot do the job alone.

It would be a national tragedy if America were to reverse its commitment to seek to insure a decent, dignified life for all of its people and try to substitute charity for justice instead.

Charity is something given out of generosity and should be applauded, encouraged and supported by religious and other caring institutions. Charity, though, should never be mistaken for or substituted for justice, which is a matter of entitlement. In fact, Hebrew, the language of the Biblical prophets, has no word for charity. Rather these prophets set forth as God's fundamental demand, the pursuit of justice.

We believe that the distinctive responsibility of religion includes proclaiming God's work and doing His commandments through providing social services and advocating justice. However, if all religious groups reached their full potential in caring for the poor, millions of people still would receive no help at all because of inadequate resources and mechanisms.

We recall that government stepped into the breach when it was widely

recognized that the problems of the poor, the handicapped, the widow and the orphaned could not be solved by the private sector alone.

We remember that as recently as 1964, one-third of all American children went to bed hungry. Government programs developed within the past decade and a half, whatever their limitations, abuses or drawbacks, have essentially ended the shame of starvation in this country.

We can recollect a time when old age and retirement were often periods of penury and absolute dependence. Government programs, including social security, have made major gains toward insuring that individuals have resources to live in dignity in their later years, though many of the elderly still do not have the minimal income and services to achieve that dignity.

The success of the basic social service, education and health programs has been directly related to the categorical nature of the Federal funds allocated to them. Despite shortcomings in regulations and implementation, funds were clearly earmarked for specific uses.

The Administration's proposal to consolidate a great many health, social service and education programs into four large block grants would, we believe, have disastrous consequences. Targeted groups such as needy school children, the handicapped or the indigent elderly would no longer be guaranteed the funds to meet their special, identified needs. The proposal for block grants would repeal the legislative authority for more than 60 essential programs in these fields. Inflation and fixed funding levels would mean an effective reduction of nearly 60% in 1980 funding levels for the programs consolidated into block grants. This consolidation and these sharp reductions would pit the recipients of varied services against each other at the state and local levels in a destructive struggle for the remaining funds.

Loss of Federal funds under the Administration's proposals may well exceed \$100,000,000 in the metropolitan Washington area. The District of Columbia alone will bear more than half of these cuts. There will be substantial losses in the private and non-profit sectors, affecting their ability to serve those

(over)

in need. The human suffering would be immeasurable.

We note that the proposed budget cuts nationally are more than offset by increases in the military budget. Yet the security and safety of America cannot be sustained abroad by military might while at home large segments of our society are set against one another in a battle over precious national resources essential to the struggle for social justice.

The resources and leadership of our national government have been required to insure that many fundamental human needs and rights are increasingly protected for our people. America's commitment to justice and its progress in achieving this since the Great Depression must not now be exchanged for charity through the budgeting process.

June 17, 1981

THE INTERFAITH CONFERENCE OF METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON
1419 V Street, Northwest, Washington, D.C. 20009
(202) 234-6300

NOTE TO COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE: the statement was also sent to approximately 1500 congregations in the metropolitan Washington area, along with some background information, action suggestions, and a cover letter from Bishop Marino.

MRS. MARY E. BULL, PRES.
MD. INTERFAITH COM. FOR SCHOOL PRAYER
4601 N. PARK AVE., #711
CHEVY CHASE, MD 20815

January 20, 1983

Dear Mr. Blackwell:

This week I received word that the Rev. Claude Pike, Co-ordinator of the National Day of Prayer Committee, would like to have me, and our organization assist his committee at the National Religious Broadcasters Conv. on Feb. 1 and 2.

Rev. Pike has asked me to communicate with you about urging President Reagan to issue a National Day of Prayer Proclamation while the NRB convention is on. It would be a great idea and would strengthen any renewed efforts for school prayer.

As I told you when Mr. + Mrs. Bennett Miller and I saw you in December 1982, we know the President is very sincere in his desire for school prayer, and we always defend him.

Did you know that Judge Hand dismissed the court case and suit in Alabama last week? Please read the enclosed, and tell me what you think.
with utmost sincerity Mary E. Bull

Maryland Interfaith Committee for School Prayer

Apartment #711

4601 North Park Avenue
Telephone: Area Code 301 986-0115

Chevy Chase, MD 20815

December 17, 1982

To Those who are concerned with the free exercise of Religion, and Religious Liberty!

We Christians, Jews and those who believe in One God, in the efficacy of Prayer, in the Old and New Testament readings, need to grab the offensive from the Atheists, the A.C.L.U. Non-Believers, and most of the Supreme Court, and all who contribute toward destroying Religious Liberty and Religious Freedom in the United States. We have been defensive, and meekly trying to placate "Others" by saying "We" are doing nothing wrong, and sometimes apologizing for our actions or words, but they are prohibiting the free exercise of Religion, and interfering with our Religious Liberty and with that of thousands of others.

THEY ARE THE ONES THAT ARE UNCONSTITUTIONAL, NOT US!

We are praying for them; that they will mend their ways, and cease wrongdoing. Also we are praying most fervently that God will answer our prayers for guidance, for co-operation with others like minded so that we may work together, and pray together without complete theological agreement, for our students and those who need the guidance, the solace and the love of God. We ask this in the name of God that has so richly blest our Nation with courageous men and women who are willing - to speak out for equal justice under law when it is necessary, so help me God!

Mary E. Bull, President, MD Interfaith Comm. for School Prayer

Please add your signature if you are in favor of the above statement and give a copy of this to another likely signer. Please fill this sheet with signers & return to me: Mrs. George G. Bull

Mary E. Bull



Interfaith Conference
of Metropolitan Washington

March 27, 1981

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Bishop Nathaniel Linsey
Vice-President
Rabbi Eugene J. Lipman
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Imam Rajee Abdur Rashid
The Rev. Edward A. White

The Most Rev. Eugene A. Marino
President
The Rt. Rev. John T. Walker
Past President

Mr. Morton Blackwell
Room 136
Executive Office Building
1700 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Blackwell,

Thank you for our conversation Wednesday. I look forward to the opportunity to meet with you on Thursday, April 2, at 4:00 p.m. in your office. I trust this opportunity to get to know each other will bear fruit in the months and years to come.

For your information, I have enclosed a copy of a one-page description of the Interfaith Conference.

Cordially,

Rev. Clark Lobenstine
Executive Director

CL/nuk
Enclosure

*Talked with Naomi Kaminsky
Apr. 8. we will set up
appointment for next week*

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**INTERFAITH CONFERENCE
MEMBER FAITH GROUPS**

JEWISH

**American Jewish Committee, Washington Chapter
Jewish Community Council of Greater Washington
Washington Board of Rabbis**

- MUSLIM

**American Muslim Mission, Inc., Washington Masjid
The Islamic Center**

PROTESTANT

**African Methodist Episcopal, Second Episcopal District
African Methodist Episcopal Zion, Washington District
Baptist Association of Southern Maryland
Baptist Convention of D.C. and Vicinity
Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ), Capital Area
Christian Methodist Episcopal, Seventh Episcopal District
Church of the Brethren, Mid-Atlantic District
Church of God in Christ
Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Bibleway Worldwide
Council of Churches of Greater Washington
Council of Community Churches
D.C. Baptist Convention
Episcopal Diocese of Washington
Lutheran Church in America, Maryland Synod
National Capital Area Association of Friends
National Capital Baptist Convention
National Capital Union Presbytery
Northern Virginia Baptist Association
Potomac River Baptist Association
United Church of Christ, Potomac Association
United Methodist Church, Baltimore Annual Conference**

ROMAN CATHOLIC

Archdiocese of Washington



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- The Rev. Sean O'Malley
- Imam Rajee Abdur Rashid
- The Rev. Edward A. White

- The Most Rev. Eugene A. Marino
President
- The Rt. Rev. John T. Walker
Past President

File

April 2, 1981

Dear Mr Blackwell

I was saddened to learn this afternoon of the sudden death in your family. I pray that god's comforting and strengthening grace will undergird you and your family in these days of grief and sorrow.

In His love,
Clark Lobenstein
Clark Lobenstein
Executive Director

Apr 16
4 PM

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ROMAN CATHOLIC

Archdiocese of Washington