

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 30, 1969

Dear Bayard:

I enclose a letter being sent to all Upward Bound directors and consultants by Mr. Rumsfeld. This is, of course, in response to your letter to me of August 12 reporting the incredible and intolerable behavior of the former Director of Upward Bound, and enclosing a reply by you to the attack which he had addressed to that group. Mr. Rumsfeld's letter will distribute your reply to all those who received the original letter from Billings.

In the nature of the situation this is, I suppose, all that can be done. An outrageous charge has been made and distributed, a reply is distributed in return. However, you and I know that the exchange is rarely an equal one. It is clear to me that you have been done an intolerable injury by an official of the United States government. I have established that Mr. Billings' letter is dated a day after his resignation from the government, and that it was sent without the knowledge of his superiors in the Office of Economic Opportunity. (Mr. Billings became Deputy Project Manager of the Upward Bound Program in April 1967 and shortly thereafter became Project Manager, which post he left on June 15, 1969 on the occasion of the transfer of the program from OEO to HEW.) The fact remains that a government official, on stationery of the Executive Office of the President, directed an extended personal attack against a private citizen because of views expressed by that citizen on public issues. The letter was written and mailed at government expense, and sent to persons who in one form or another are recipients of public monies disbursed by the same public official.

As you will be the first to agree, the injury done you has nothing to do with the rightness or wrongness of your views. The issue is the intimidation by Government of a private citizen because of his holding disapproved opinions.

This is the essence of thought control in a totalitarian state. Those who express thoughts disapproved of by those who control the

government machinery are villified and defamed; others who might be so tempted are warned of the consequences in the most vulgar terms. "You, too, can get in trouble."

I do not know which development appalls me more: that Billings sent the letter, or that no Project Upward Director has apparently seen fit to protest it. Have Americans become so accustomed to seeing government abusing the rights of individuals and intimidating the recipients of government benefactions? I recall from my youth the observation that if fascism should ever come to the United States it would be in the guise of anti-Fascism. I very much fear we see the tendency in this squalid enterprise.

Mr. Billings was clearly not appointed by this administration. His letter is as disrespectful to President Nixon, as it is libelous of you. No persons of responsibility in the present administration even knew of the letter. But that, of course, is small consolation.

It should be clear from my letter how much I have been troubled by this event. If you should for any reason wish to make my letter public, do not hesitate to do so.

Sincerely,

Daniel P. Moynihan
Assistant to the President

Mr. Bayard Rustin
Executive Director
A. Philip Randolph Institute
260 Park Avenue South
New York, N. Y. 10010

Encl - Xerox copy of Director Rumsfeld's Memo to Upward Bound
Project Directors (undated) w/encl - cy Bayard Rustin's
ltr to Thos Billings, August 12, 1969

bcc: Irving Kristol, Editor, The Public Interest
Norman Podhoretz, Editor, Commentary

DPM/crm

OFFICE OF ECONOMIC
OPPORTUNITY

MEMORANDUM

TO: Upward Bound Project Directors

FROM: Don Rumsfeld, Director, Office of Economic Opportunity

In late June, Thomas A. Billings, former Director of Upward Bound, sent an open letter for Mr. Bayard Rustin to all Upward Bound Project Directors and Consultants. It is clear to me that Mr. Rustin has been done an intolerable injury by a man who was an official of the United States Government.

Mr. Billings' letter was dated the day after his resignation from the Government, and sent without the knowledge of his supervisors in the Office of Economic Opportunity. The fact remains that a government official, on stationery of the Executive Office of the President, directed an extended personal attack against a private citizen because of views expressed by that citizen on public issues. The letter was written and mailed at government expense, and sent to persons who in one form or another are recipients of public monies disbursed by the same government official.

The injury done Mr. Rustin has nothing whatsoever to do with the rightness or wrongness of his views. Those who express thoughts disapproved of by those who control the government machinery should not be vilified.

Mr. Rustin has no way of knowing to whom the Billings letter was sent, nor should he be required to pay the cost of replying. I have therefore asked that Mr. Rustin's reply to the Billings letter be sent to those individuals who received the Billings letter, together with this memorandum.

W. PERRIN

A. Philip Randolph Institute

August 12, 1969

260 Park Avenue South
New York, N.Y. 10010
(212) 533-8000

Thomas A. Billings
Director, Project Upward Bound
Office of Economic Opportunity
Washington, D.C. 20506

Dear Mr. Billings:

I found your open letter to me opposing my position on separatist black studies very interesting, not for anything it had to say about black studies or higher education, but for what it revealed about your own dilemma and by extension, the dilemma of other similarly situated white liberals.

You are convinced "that our current national tragedy reflects the eclipse of 'liberal learning' and the bankruptcy of liberal knowledge in the nation..." Since you are a liberal, I think this remark betrays an exquisite form of self-contempt, a self-contempt that is not entirely unrelated to the extraordinary guilt with which liberals like yourself are reacting to our racial crisis. If liberalism is bankrupt and in decline as you maintain, if it lacks any revitalizing tradition and system of values, then follows that liberals must look beyond themselves for a new world view, a new source of vitality. They must look figuratively to the East, to African and Asiatic culture, which has always represented in Western consciousness the subjective urges of man that which is primitive, irrational, vital; that which other words, which they have repressed. And in America, alas, they look toward the Negro. Draw unwittingly upon our country's racist heritage, to place the Negro in the role of the natural man called to revive the juices of white civilization.

A second aspect to the problem is relevant here. There is a psychological phenomenon occurring today among increasing numbers of affluent, highly-educated Americans like yourself that has been variously described as "cultural alienation" or "identity crisis."

- A. Philip Randolph
President
- Robert W. Gilmore
Treasurer
- Bayard Rustin
Executive Director
- Norman Hill
Associate Director
- National Advisory Board
 - Dorothy Height
 - John Lewis
 - Roy Wilkins
 - Whitney Young
- Executive Board
 - David T. Bazelon
 - John C. Bennett
 - Charles Bloomstein
 - Irving Bluestone
 - Ralph Bunche
 - Kenneth B. Clark
 - Samuel Cook
 - Ossie Davis
 - Walter Davis
 - Michael Harrington
 - Gordon Haskell
 - Ralph Helstein
 - Vivian Henderson
 - Tom Kahn
 - Kivio Kaplan
 - Leon Keyserling
 - Jim Lawson
 - Benjamin E. Mays
 - Isaiah Minkoff
 - Rev. Gregory Mooney
 - John Morsell
 - Emanuel Muravchik
 - Pauli Murray
 - Eleanor H. Norton
 - Frederick O'Neal
 - Rabbi Joachim Prinz
 - L. D. Reddick
 - Albert Shanker
 - Donald P. Slaiman
 - Gus Tyler
 - C. Vann Woodward
 - Andrew Young
- Staff
 - Rachelle Horowitz
Administrative Secretary

orientation that Arnold Toynbee has called "subjective proletarianism." It is a romantic form of politics rooted in guilt, acutely sensitive to problems concerning individuality and identity, and characterized by a peculiar combination of self-deprecation and snobbish patronization. Thus it is not surprising that this lumpen-intelligentsia would react with unusual enthusiasm to the position of black nationalists, would romanticize their demands for separatism and self-determination, and would identify these demands as the position of the "black community," when, in fact, they represent the views of a small minority of Negroes. Negroes have been used and exploited in many ways by white Americans, but it is only recently that they have been asked to satisfy the masochistic craving of disenchanted liberals for flagellation and rejection.

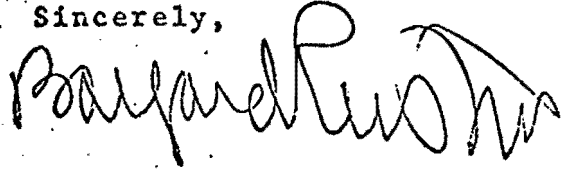
Let me be quite explicit. There is today a legitimate and heated debate going on within the Negro community between separatists and integrationists. It is not a new debate, but one that has recurred repeatedly in the history of black Americans, particularly during periods of political reaction when many Negroes, out of despair, want to withdraw from the mainstream of our society. You are certainly free to take sides in this debate, even if in the process you must patronizingly indicate to Negroes their need for a "sense of pride, of cultural legacy, of self-confidence." I should think that you are far more lacking in these qualities, for you have nothing but disdain for your own cultural and intellectual tradition.

Let me remind you that my position in this debate derives from my experience as a black man in America (not as a "Suburban Anglo-Saxon Executive"), from my knowledge that separatism historically and presently for Negroes has been indistinguishable from inequality, exploitation, and poverty, and that despite all the romantic rhetoric used to make it appear respectable, separatism shall continue to be immortal and degrading. It was not out of any failure to perceive the nature of the "real world" that I spent 28 months in a federal penitentiary for my pacifist beliefs, or 30 days on a chain-gang in North Carolina for trying to integrate a bus, or was arrested on 21 other occasions for opposing injustice. One can be aware that "the tears of children are as 'real' as the rock of Gibraltar" without indulging in sentimentality and self-righteousness.

Despite your entreaties, I shall continue to advocate those means by which Negroes can obtain the educational skills, as well as the political and economic power, that will enable them to achieve equality within the context of American society. And I shall oppose those strategies, whether motivated out of the desire to oppress or to patronize, which can only perpetuate and compound the injustices committed against black people in this nation.

I trust you will send my reply to all the UPWARD BOUND Project Directors and Consultants.

Sincerely,



Bayard Rustin
Executive Director

BR/hh

2-1
OEO
DRAFT

August 22, 1969

Honorable Robert H. Finch
Secretary of Health, Education,
and Welfare
Washington, D. C. 20201

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Mr. Bayard Rustin has sent a copy of an "open letter" addressed to him by Thomas A. Billings, former director of Project Upward Bound and sent by Mr. Billings to all Upward Bound Project Directors and Consultants. Mr. Rustin has replied to Mr. Billings asking that the reply also be circulated. I enclose copies of this exchange.

It is clear to me, as it will be to you, that Mr. Rustin has been done an intolerable injury by an official of the United States Government. I have learned that Mr. Billings' letter is dated the day after his resignation from the government, and that it was sent without the knowledge of his superiors in the Office of Economic Opportunity. The fact remains that a government official, on stationery of the Executive Office of the President, directed an extended personal attack against a private citizen because of views expressed by that citizen on public issues. The letter was written and mailed at government expense, and sent to persons who in one form or another are recipients of public monies disbursed by the same government official.

The injury done Mr. Rustin has nothing whatsoever to do with the rightness or wrongness of his views. Those who express thoughts disapproved of by those who control the government machinery should not be villified.

I do not know which development appalls me more: that Billings sent the letter, or that no Project Upward Bound Director has apparently seen fit to protest it. Have Americans become so accustomed to seeing government abusing the rights of individuals and intimidating the recipients of government benefactions? I recall the observation that if fascism should ever come to the United States it would be in the guise of anti-Fascism. I very much fear we see the tendency in this enterprise.

Mr. Billings was clearly not appointed by this administration. His letter is as disrespectful to President Nixon as it is to Mr. Rustin. No persons of responsibility in the present administration even knew of the letter. Nonetheless the administration must make amends.

Mr. Rustin has no way of knowing to whom the Billings' letter was sent, nor should he be required to pay the cost of replying. I would like therefore respectfully to request that Mr. Rustin's reply be sent to all those persons who received the Billings' letter, with a note of explanation.

Sincerely,

Don Rumsfeld

Donald Rumsfeld
Director

Enclosures

D:DRumsfeld:ls

cc 6/5- U

DRAFT

McIner
JIMT.

OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY
Washington, D. C.

*Permitted
copy of 2/1*

August 22, 1969

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Mr. Bayard Rustin has sent me a copy of an "open letter" addressed to him by Thomas A. Billings, former director of Project Upward Bound and sent by Mr. Billings to all Upward Bound Project Directors and Consultants. Mr. Rustin has replied to Mr. Billings asking him that the reply also be circulated. I enclose copies of this exchange.

It is clear to me, as it will be to you, that Mr. Rustin has been done an intolerable injury by an official of the United States government. I have learned that Mr. Billings' letter is dated the day after his resignation from the government, and that it was sent without the knowledge of any of his superiors in the Office of Economic Opportunity. The fact remains that a government official, on stationery of the Executive Office of the President, directed an extended personal attack against a private citizen because of views expressed by that citizen on public issues. The letter was written and mailed at government expense, and sent to persons who in one form or another are recipients of public monies disbursed by the same government official.

The injury done Mr. Rustin has nothing whatsoever to do with the rightness or wrongness of his views. I, for example, would not agree either with him or Billings. This has nothing to do with the matter. The issue is the intimidation of a citizen for holding disapproved opinions.

This is the essence of thought control in a totalitarian state. Those who express thoughts disapproved of by those who control the government machinery are villified and defamed; others who might be so tempted are warned of the consequences in the most vulgar terms. "You, too, can get in trouble."

↓

I do not know which development appalls me more: that Billings sent the letter, or that no Project Upward Director has apparently seen fit to protest it. Have Americans become so accustomed to seeing government abusing the rights of individuals and intimidating the recipients of government benefactions? I recall from my youth the observation that if fascism should ever come to the United States it would be in the guise of anti-Fascism. I very much fear we see the tendency in this squalid enterprise.

Mr. Billings was clearly not appointed by this administration. His letter is as disrespectful to President Nixon, as it is libelous of Mr. ⁴⁸Rustin. No persons of responsibility in the present administration even knew of the letter. [Nonetheless the administration must make amends.]

Mr. Rustin has no way of knowing to whom the Billings' letter was sent, nor should he be required to pay the cost of replying. I would like therefore respectfully to request that Mr. Rustin's reply be sent to all those persons who received the Billings' letter, with a note of explanation. If you feel this letter would serve that purpose, feel free to attach it.

Sincerely,

DONALD RUMSFELD
Director

Honorable Robert H. Finch
Secretary of Health, Education,
and Welfare
330 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D. C. 20201

Encls

**Philip
Randolph
Institute**

260 Park Avenue South
New York, N.Y. 10010
(212) 533-8000

August 12, 1969

A. Philip Randolph
President

Robert W. Gilmore
Treasurer

Bayard Rustin
Executive Director

Norman Hill
Associate Director

National Advisory Board

Dorothy Height
John Lewis
Roy Wilkins
Whitney Young

Executive Board

David T. Bazelon
John C. Bennett
Charles Bloomstein
Irving Bluestone
Ralph Bunche
Kenneth B. Clark
Samuel Cook
Ossie Davis
Walter Davis
Michael Harrington
Gordon Haskell
Ralph Helstein
Vivian Henderson
Tom Kahn
Kivie Kaplan
Leon Keyserling
Jim Lawson
Benjamin E. Mays
Isaiah Minkoff
Rev. Gregory Mooney
John Morsell
Emanuel Muravchik
Pauli Murray
Eleanor H. Norton
Frederick O'Neal
Rabbi Joachim Prinz
L. D. Reddick
Albert Shanker
Donald P. Slaiman
Gus Tyler
C. Vann Woodward
Andrew Young

Staff

Rachelle Horowitz
Administrative Secretary

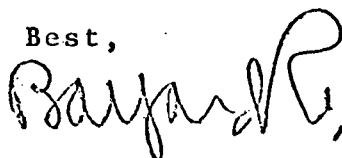
Emma Thomas
Office Manager

Mr. Daniel P. Moynihan
Assistant to the President
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Pat:

Enclosed is an open letter to me written by Thomas A. Billings, the Director of Upward Bound, and my reply. I have requested that he send my reply to the Upward Bound Project Directors and Consultants who have also received his original letter.

Best,



Bayard Rustin
Executive Director

BR/hh
encl:

312

A. Philip Randolph Institute

260 Park Avenue South
New York, N.Y. 10010
(212) 533-8000

A. Philip Randolph
President

Robert W. Gilmore
Treasurer

Bayard Rustin
Executive Director

Norman Hill
Associate Director

National Advisory Board

Dorothy Height
John Lewis
Roy Wilkins
Whitney Young

Executive Board

David T. Bazelon
John C. Bennett
Charles Bloomstein
Irving Bluestone
Ralph Bunche
Kenneth B. Clark
Samuel Cook
Ossie Davis
Walter Davis
Michael Harrington
Gordon Haskell
Ralph Heistein
Vivian Henderson
Tom Kahn
Kivie Kaplan
Leon Keyserling
Jim Lawson
Benjamin E. Mays
Isaiah Minkoff
Rev. Gregory Mooney
John Morsell
Emanuel Muravchik
Pauli Murray
Eleanor H. Norton
Frederick O'Neal
Rabbi Joachim Prinz
L. D. Reddick
Albert Shanker
Donald P. Slaiman
Gus Tyler
C. Vann Woodward
Andrew Young

Staff

Rachelle Horowitz
Administrative Secretary
Emma Thomas

August 12, 1969

Thomas A. Billings
Director, Project Upward Bound
Office of Economic Opportunity
Washington, D.C. 20506

Dear Mr. Billings:

I found your open letter to me opposing my position on separatist black studies very interesting, not for anything it had to say about black studies or higher education, but for what it revealed about your own dilemma and by extension, the dilemma of other similarly situated white liberals.

You are convinced "that our current national tragedy reflects the eclipse of 'liberal learning' and the bankruptcy of liberal knowledge in the nation..." Since you are a liberal, I think this remark betrays an exquisite form of self-contempt, a self-contempt that is not entirely unrelated to the extraordinary guilt with which liberals like yourself are reacting to our racial crisis. If liberalism is bankrupt and in decline as you maintain, if it lacks any revitalizing tradition and system of values, then follows that liberals must look beyond themselves for a new world view, a new source of vitality. must look figuratively to the East, to African and Asiatic culture, which has always represented in Western consciousness the subjective urges of man, that which is primitive, irrational, vital; that, other words, which they have repressed. And in America, alas, they look toward the Negro. Drawn unwittingly upon our country's racist heritage, they place the Negro in the role of the natural man come to revive the juices of white civilization.

A second aspect to the problem is relevant here. There is a psychological phenomenon occurring today among increasing numbers of affluent, highly-educated Americans like yourself that has been variously described as anomic, alienation, identity crisis.

orientation that Arnold Toynbee has called "subjective proletarianism." It is a romantic form of politics rooted in guilt, acutely sensitive to problems concerning individuality and identity, and characterized by a peculiar combination of self-deprecation and snobbish patronization. Thus it is not surprising that this lumpen-intelligentsia would react with unusual enthusiasm to the position of black nationalists, would romanticize their demands for separatism and self-determination, and would identify these demands as the position of the "black community," when, in fact, they represent the views of a small minority of Negroes. Negroes have been used and exploited in many ways by white Americans, but it is only recently that they have been asked to satisfy the masochistic craving of disenchanted liberals for flagellation and rejection.

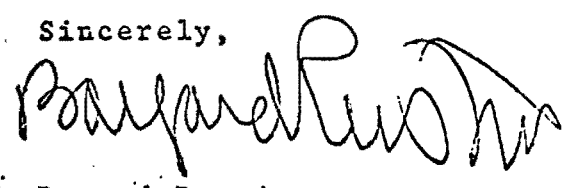
Let me be quite explicit. There is today a legitimate and heated debate going on within the Negro community between separatists and integrationists. It is not a new debate, but one that has recurred repeatedly in the history of black Americans, particularly during periods of political reaction when many Negroes, out of despair, want to withdraw from the mainstream of our society. You are certainly free to take sides in this debate, even if in the process you must patronizingly indicate to Negroes their need for a "sense of pride, of cultural legacy, of self-confidence." I should think that you are far more lacking in these qualities, for you have nothing but disdain for your own cultural and intellectual tradition.

Let me remind you that my position in this debate derives from my experience as a black man in America (not as a "Suburban Anglo-Saxon Executive"), from my knowledge that separatism historically and presently for Negroes has been indistinguishable from inequality, exploitation, and poverty, and that despite all the romantic rhetoric used to make it appear respectable, separatism shall continue to be immortal and degrading. It was not out of any failure to perceive the nature of the "real world" that I spent 28 months in a federal penitentiary for my pacifist beliefs, or 30 days on a chain-gang in North Carolina for trying to integrate a bus, or was arrested on 21 other occasions for opposing injustice. One can be aware that "the tears of children are as 'real' as the rock of Gibraltar" without indulging in sentimentality and self-righteousness.

Despite your entreaties, I shall continue to advocate those means by which Negroes can obtain the educational skills, as well as the political and economic power, that will enable them to achieve equality within the context of American society. And I shall oppose those strategies, whether motivated out of the desire to oppress or to patronize, which can only perpetuate and compound the injustices committed against black people in this nation.

I trust you will send my reply to all the UPWARD BOUND Project Directors and Consultants.

Sincerely,



Bayard Rustin
Executive Director

BR/hh

OFFICE OF ECONOMIC
OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

15
3

June 16, 1969.

TO: UPWARD BOUND Project Directors
and Consultants

FROM: Thomas A. Billings
Director, Project UPWARD BOUND

AN OPEN LETTER TO BAYARD RUSTIN

As a long-time admirer of yours, I am hesitant about challenging any of your remarks regarding the needs and aspirations of black youth in America. Certainly you should know more about those needs and aspirations than I do. A white man half your age should probably remain silent when you speak on racial matters.

But your recent remarks regarding "soul courses" and the "real world" went infinitely beyond mere instruction to black youth. Your remarks, among other things, strike at the very heart of "liberal education." Since I am persuaded that our current national tragedy reflects the eclipse of "liberal learning" and (the bankruptcy of liberal knowledge) in the nation, I am compelled to radically disagree with you about (1) the value of "soul courses" and, (2) their relevance to the "real world."

Because I want you to understand what I hope to say about the "real world," Mr. Rustin, I will avoid most of the technical language of philosophy normally connected with discussions of this sort. Part of our problem nowadays stems from (our careless use of language) on the one hand and our use of pseudo-technical language on the other hand.

But before I get into a conversation with you about the "real world," Mr. Rustin, let me point out that there have been three great problems--or questions--or branches of philosophy. The three great questions have been: What is real? What is true? What is good? These remarkably durable human questions have given rise to three great areas of human inquiry. Generally, questions about "reality" fall to the ontologists for response. The scientific method is a natural outgrowth of man's concern for the "real world"; both the soft and hard sciences are stalwarts in the house of ontology.

Questions about "truth" gave rise to epistemology or, put another way, to that branch of philosophy which explores human comprehension of "the real," an inquiry into how man learns about "the real." Commonly, philosophy 101 attempts to reveal the complex and intimate relationship between "the real" and "the true." Let me assure you, epistemology is a veritable mine field of ancillary questions: If real, is it also true? Can something be true, but not real? Aren't reality and truth one? Is reality general, objective and universal or is it specific, subjective, and particular? If you remove the human subject, does reality have "meaning"? If so, to whom? If not, does the "real world" depend upon human interpretation? Is the "real world" an invention or a discovery? Is the world of "ought" as "real" as the world of "is"? Is an idea "real"? As "real" as a rock? Are there modes of "reality"? Was Martin Luther King's dream real? Are social "realities" immutably decreed by the Gods, or are they products of human imagination, hence subject to human revision?

The third great question--What is good?--gave rise to ethics, the consideration of human (interpersonal) relationships. The profound questions of "good" and "evil" appear here, inextricably bound up with questions about the "real" and the "true," that is, bound up with ontology and epistemology.

For at least 5000 years, Mr. Rustin, men on this planet have been grappling with these great prime questions. I was startled, therefore, by the suddenness with which you closed out the dialogue and bolted the door of inquiry and revision. Obviously, at last we have it: "X has no meaning in the 'real world.'" What else, Mr. Rustin, beyond "soul courses," have "no meaning in the real world"? Is it possible that souls have no place in the "real world"? Are all the attributes and delights of the human soul equally untenable in "the real world"? What would nurture a soul, Mr. Rustin, but soul courses, i.e., instruction? What place has poetry in your "real world," Mr. Rustin--or art or dance or drama? Aren't "soul courses," now }?

urged by black youth, only a combination of the art, poetry, music, and literature of black people cast in the mold of the American black experience? Isn't that art and that poetry and that music and that literature "real" and hasn't the black experience in America been "real"? Isn't all poetry and all art and all music and all literature only the expression of a people's life experience whether its the art and poetry and music and literature of American blacks or the art, poetry, music and literature of American Celts, Buriat Mongolians, Berber Tribesmen, Basque Shepherds, Mexican Villagers, Catholic Bavarians, Irish Republicans, Vietnamese Nationals, Buddhist Monks, Japanese Fishermen, Islandic Eskimos, Javanese Mountainmen, or Suburban Anglo-Saxon Executives.

Or is the "real world" only the world--objective and subjective--which the American marketing-military-industrial Establishment has fashioned? I think that I could agree with you that "soul courses" aren't going to be worth a dime in that world. But, Mr. Rustin, is that the "real world"? If so, is it at the same time, "true" and "good"? If it is not true and good, do you suppose "soul courses" would help it become not only "real," but "true" and "good," or is it possible that truth and goodness have no meaning in the "real world"? My God, has it really come to that?

How long has it been, Mr. Rustin, since you took a long, hard look at the curriculum in the schools of America? What sense of pride, of cultural legacy, of self-confidence accrues to a Chicano child after 12 years in the public schools of El Paso, Texas? What sense of pride, of cultural legacy, of self-confidence accrues to a North Cheyenne child after 12 years in the public school of Billings, Montana? What sense of pride, of cultural legacy, of self-confidence accrues to a black child after 12 years in the public schools of Montgomery, Alabama or Shreveport, Louisiana? What is the effect on a child's spirit when he finds that the language spoken in his home, the language of his mother's lullabies and his father's pride, is illegal, not the language spoken in the "real world"? What is the effect on a child's spirit when the sounds and sights and loves and hopes of his little world are systematically excluded from the "real world"? What mangling of the spirit must come, what breakage of the heart must follow the "realization," i.e., the desperate assimilation into the "real world" of these troubled centers of little worlds? Or worse, what rage must follow these violations of the little

worlds of Ben Hernandez and John Has-Many-Horses and Joyce Lee and Johnny Old-Coyote?

If I understand anything about American youth it is that many of them are deeply unhappy about the "real world"; they are not at all sure that it is the world in which they want to live and work. Many of them--and God bless them for it--long for a better world, a more responsible world, a more humane world, a world in which the tears of children are as "real" as the rock of Gibraltar and ever so much more alarming than the dips in the Dow-Jones Industrial Average. Most of them want desperately to believe in the human capacities of labor and intelligence and compassion. Most of them are sick to death of political chicanery, racial bigotry, religious hypocrisy, international looting and piracy disguised as the "national interest." Most of them are just tired of the champagne music of Lawrence Welk and the silly charade of manliness staged by America's business elite. It's this world, Mr. Rustin, that our young people are saying must go! The "real world"? Alas, of course it is! But not forever! Our young are a part of the "real world," too, Mr. Rustin, as real as General Motors and Wall Street and Howard Hughes and American Airlines and Richard Nixon and J. Edgar Hoover and the United Fruit Company. And their hopes are real, and their dreams and tears. And their anger!

A last point. Technical skill is always an important thing to have. Techne--or "know-how," while highly prized among the Greeks, was rarely confused with either knowledge (gnosis)--or wisdom (sophia), both of which were infinitely more valuable than techne. Techne was techne--craftsmanship, skill, technique, an important attribute in the work-a-day world. But, the Greek world was more than the work-a-day world. It included art and poetry and drama; indeed, much of the world's great soul food. Only among slaves was the work-a-day world the whole world, the "real world." For you not to know this would be an unbearable irony, Mr. Rustin, and a tragic paradox.

August 21, 1969

MEMORANDUM TO: Daniel P. Moynihan
Special Assistant to the President
for Urban Affairs

SUBJECT: Tom Billings

Attached are the brief biographical details on Tom Billings which you requested. Note that he left our payroll on June 15 which apparently is simultaneous with the letter he sent out.

Tom is noted for a very low flash point which frequently led to his writing very rash letters to those who offended his ideas on how the world should be run. I was instrumental in stopping several of these before they were dispatched, but the one regarding Rustin apparently was his own idea of the fond farewell to OEO and Upward Bound.



Robert Perrin
Acting Deputy Director

Attachment