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MR. WILLIAMS: I am very happy to be here, to have been invited to come and share in this momentous occasion, and I consider it such because we have a chance to update history and that's why I think it's very important for us to be here and for them to be here, the Eisenhower Foundation to come and talk.

I want to make a number of points though because I'm also doubly happy at this time because I just came from standing out in line at the New Jersey PAC in that cold, cold winter with my son because he wanted to audition for The Lion King.

And I just want you to know that my son made the first cut for The Lion King. Stand up, Shane!

I'm up here. Now my time starts.

To examine this subject and to add my two cents worth for the update, I'm going to be reading a little bit from an article in the Bergen Record, November 28th, 2007. It didn't get much attention. It didn't get into the Ledger. It certainly didn't get on the electronic media, but it says New Jersey's poorest children fare worse than poor children in nearly every other state in the nation according to a damning new report analyzing data from the US Census Bureau and The Center for Disease, Control and Prevention.

New Jersey's children are in poorer health, exercise less, read less, participate in fewer after-school clubs and teams and live in more dangerous neighborhoods than most poor children in the country. They're more likely to be overweight, have asthma, live in single-parent households, have emotional and behavioral difficulties and have parents who lack secure employment. Only worse than New Jersey, only worse are New York, Rhode Island and Massachusetts.

Now, in the analysis portion of that article, which is what I want to explore with us, the reader -- the writer reached the same conclusion I did when he said the neediest kids tend to live in the richest states including New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts.

Big northeastern cities are home to some of the most concentrated poverty in the country, and that's your new split. That's your new division. It's called the haves and the have nots.

But it went on to say The southern states -- remember we started demonstrating in the southern states. I was one of those folks. -- which are disproportionately poor, rank far better than many other states in the well-being of low income children.

Now, does this mean that in terms of updating the Kerner Report, which says there are two nations, one white and one black, does that mean that we now ought to switch focus to income instead of race.

As Amina Baraffa talked a little bit before, race is really a construct. Race is a construct to gain privileges for a few, and what this means is that much has been taken from the many to support those privileges of the few.

So when you're talking about class, you're talking about race in this country. Poverty then is a byproduct of racism in this country because the most exploited people are people of color.

Now, just to give you an example, somebody mentioned Abbott. The Abbott program there is based on a class analysis that said you should give more money to children in poor districts, but 86 percent of those children are black and Latino. And so the new face of racial division, I suggest, is mapped by the language of poverty.

Results, we get confused. We get confused because, you see, we don't know that much about class as much as we know about race.

If the Ku Klux Klan comes to Newark, we know what to do to the Ku Klux Klan, but when Abbott comes to Newark, people say, well, no, we need to have vouchers, we need to have all of these other things instead of saying we need to make the public schools better. Why? To take care of those 86 percent of the children.

Now, that has other ramifications. What happens is it leads to an us versus them, which is unnatural. It's them over there who are unworthy. They are the poor. They are the downcast. Why? It's their fault. We hear it all the time in the business that I'm in.

Parents get involved in education -- and, by the way, the Abbott Leadership Institute is here today. We're teaching parents how to get involved in schools.

And you say it's the parents' fault. That's a byproduct of that us versus them. It's their fault. You get what you deserve because you can't pull yourself up by your own bootstraps. This is America.

Now, I want to give you a little example of how that plays out, and then I'm going to finish, because also in the newspaper -- and this was the day before yesterday and it broke my heart. Somebody mentioned it. I think Donna mentioned it. Newark to raze housing project, R-a-z, not r-a-i-s-e, raze housing project. Repairs too costly for Baxter Terrace.

Well, the question is how did they get as bad as they got, but I'm ahead of my story.

Opened in 1941, Baxter Terrace was one of the new Housing Authority's first projects to provide safe, clean housing for the poor. It has degenerated into a -- listen to this. This is how the Housing Authority described it. -- into a dangerous and drug-ridden property where there have been at least four murders since 2005. But listen to who's in there. The average yearly income of the residents is little more than \$9,800, and only, -- here's where the separation comes, -- 355 of the 502 units are occupied. Baxter Terrace is broken said Housing Authority Director Keith Kinard.

Well, how did it get broken? What happened to all the money that was supposed to be put in there to keep it up over the time? Where are those people going to go when they tear it down? What about these other projects that they're now predicting are also going to be torn down, Seth Boyden, Felix Fuld, Bradley Court?

We were told that we need to get rid of our high-rise. We took down 15,000 of them and now we're going to take care of the rest. We're pushing the poor out of Newark.

And so we're going to have another divide here, which is going to then get headlines because you see with the poor gone, you're going to find the school grades are going to rise. Oh, look, we fixed the school system. You didn't fix the school system. You pushed the poor aside and the poor are people of color.

So we're talking about the same thing, race and class. We need to learn that it's an artificial divide. We need an independent political organization that's going to make people understand we know what side the bread is buttered.

Thank you all and I'll conclude.