

QUESTION: Governor, does that mean that you agree basically with Mr. Wilkins' philosophy, he being noted as the leading moderate Negro leader in the country? Is this your philosophy too?

GOVERNOR:

I don't think that Mr. Wilkins is a moderate leader in the sense that he is impeding or not aggressive enough in achieving the objectives that his organization has set. I think he is much more effective because he is reasonable and articulate, and not emotional, in his approach to the problem. So when you say moderate this again is a characterization that can mean many things to many people. Among some of the younger Negro element, it may mean slow, uncle Tomish. I don't consider him moderate in that respect. I think he is skillful, and I think he represents the kind of leadership that does not divide the races but unites them. I think that is where his tremendous value comes in. I am delighted that he is here and that the people in Maryland, through the news media, have a chance to personally observe him, to listen to the way he handles the questions, and to see how his mind works because this is his real strength.

QUESTION: Governor, I'd like to renew the question of Baltimore in another context because when Watts broke out Mayor Yorty of Los Angeles evidenced great surprise. Just recently in Plainfield the people said it could never happen here. In that context, what does everything you've looked at show you about the situation in Baltimore?

GOVERNOR:

Everything that I have seen indicates that I have no cause for unrest, and as I mentioned at the outset of this meeting the main reason I wanted Mr. Wilkins here at a time when there was no problem was to demonstrate that the way we can be most effective in our solutions to the problems that exist is to act independently of suggestion or force and act because we are convinced within us that the action is needed and not simply to put out a fire. I don't think any fire exists in Baltimore; I don't see any reason to feel that Baltimore is close to an explosion. On the other hand, I would be remiss if I didn't say that there have been explosions where they were not expected before. I have no way of judging this, and I emphasize that the least amount of attention devoted to the fact that riots do happen the better off we are going to be. Nobody wants riots. Riots don't solve anything. Riots simply impede the progress we're all interested in.