The "depressed" area problem is one facet, but an extremely important one, of a much broader national problem--the problem of achieving and maintaining full employment, full production and a rate of economic growth consistent with both our domestic possibilities and our responsibilities on the world scene. Upon the solution to this problem, in all its aspects, depends not only our prosperity at home and the welfare of millions of American families but the survival of freedom in the cold-war contest with totalitarian tyranny.

Obviously, the enactment of the Spence Bill will not solve all our economic problems. No one claims that it will. But it would make an important contribution to the elimination of a tragic economic waste of manpower and community facilities that as a nation we can ill afford. This Bill must be examined not merely in terms of what its separate provisions will do for this community or that. It must be viewed in the broad perspective of our national economic problem as a whole--as one important tool of the many that are required in the total effort to get our national economic house in order by getting America back to work.

The urgency of our national situation is such, as I shall try to make clear, that we must not, on pain of risking freedom's future, neglect, overlook, or fail to make full use of either the area redevelopment tool or any others in the kit that can restore our economy to full employment and healthy growth.

Manifestly we have failed miserably to deal effectively with the problems of full employment and economic growth. Unemployment in January was greater than in the same month of any year since 1941. Our rate of economic growth from 1953 through 1958 averaged only 1.3 per cent a year instead of the 5 per cent we could and should have attained.

Neither full employment nor a satisfactory rate of growth are possible so long as we fail to eliminate industrial blight. The unemployed in the depressed areas are denied their opportunity to contribute to the increase of the national product. Huge investments, private and public, in facilities that could contribute to the growth of the nation's output lie idle in whole or in part.

The festering economic sores in the depressed areas tend to reduce production and employment and to retard growth throughtout the entire economy. Reduced purchasing power of consumers in the blighted areas obviously aggravates unemployment in consumers' goods industries throughout the nation. Reduced production in the blighted areas diminishes demand for the materials, parts and components that the depressed areas would require if their workers were fully employed, thus further intensifying unemployment on a national scale. Curtailed sales of both consumers' and producers' goods in the depressed areas mean idle capacity as well as unemployment elsewhere; and idle capacity means curtailment of investments that would foster growth. Unemployment and idle capacity, rather than any lack of capital, account for the fact that business investment in plant and equipment has dropped from $37 billion in 1957 to an estimated annual rate of $30.5 in the first quarter of this year--a shrinkage of 18 percent when measured in dollars and even greater if measured in terms of physical volume.

Our failure to achieve a rate of economic growth in accordance with our potential has meant long months of unemployment for millions of men and women. It has brought tragic hardship to families, forcing the curtailment of their spending on food and other necessities, and dissipating their savings. As savings and unemployment compensation benefits were exhausted, unemployment has brought