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Two Societies'

Thirty years ago, the Kerner Commission on Civil Disorders warned: "Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white, - separate and unequal." A 30th anniversary update, prepared by the Eisenhower Foundation and due for release March 1, identifies some progress since 1968, but concludes that the "prophecy has come to pass".

Some evidence:

- The unemployment rate for young men in inner cities is over 30 percent; the national rate is under 5 percent.
- The U.S. income gap has widened to the point that the top 1 percent of Americans have more wealth than the bottom 90 percent. The poor are disproportionately African-American and Hispanic.
- One in three young black men is in prison, on probation or on parole.
- States now spend more per year on prisons than on higher education. Ten years ago the spending priorities were reversed.