

WE SEE THE WORLD THROUGH BLACK EYES



EDITORIAL FOCUS

Minority contractors lose opportunity

One of the benefits to the community that was to have accrued from the large sums of Model Cities money and HUD money spent on housing rehabilitation, street improvement, and other physical improvements was employment and income for Model Cities residents and especially for Blacks.

Although not a totally "Black" program, the Model Cities projects nationwide were the result of Black demonstrations and riots and are located in predominantly Black areas. Whether their true purpose was to aid in the economic development of Black communities or merely to quiet things down temporarily, it cannot be denied that Model Cities is directed at Black people.

One of the stipulations in all Model Cities Programs is that residents be given preference in employment. All federally funded programs are also required to include minority employees and minority business, and in fact, to aid in the development of minority enterprise.

In light of all of this, when we look at the millions of dollars that have come into Portland for physical development in the Model Cities area, we find very little of this money going to minority business.

The largest contracts to contractors for housing rehabilitation, for example, are going to white-owned companies. The leaders are: Aetna Roofing and Construction -- \$305,220 (7/1971-3/1973); A-1 Western Builders -- \$314,902; Allied Builders Systems -- \$117,735; Earl Dryer -- \$193,047; Ebelmessa Construction -- \$314,203; Neil Kelly Company -- \$238,875; Morris Construction Company -- \$141,376; Obie's Construction Company -- \$169,833; Thomas M. Williams -- \$149,504.

Compare these amounts to the Black contractors: Wendell E. Brown -- \$19,450; Flemming Construction -- \$26,150; Garris Construction -- \$50,235; Aaron Mitchell -- \$19,050; T.N. Noffa -- \$32,105; Urban Development -- \$130,391. These are the leaders, but most of the Black contractors have received contracts ranging from \$3500 to \$7000.

During this two year period white contractors earned approximately \$2,825,031, while Blacks earned approximately \$542,141.

The preference to white contractors is the result of the bidding practice. Although it is pre-determined how much will be spent on the house and how much work will be done -- contractors are required to bid and the lowest bidder gets the job. It is common practice, however, that the contractor will end up using the full amount allotted, regardless of his bid.

The bidding procedure eliminates the small contractors who cannot compete with the large companies. They must buy supplies in smaller, and therefore more expensive, quantities; and cannot use their work force in as efficient a manner.

But it is even more discriminating against the Black contractor who often has to pay higher prices for supplies; who has to pay higher insurance rates; who has difficulty getting bonding; who is more apt to use trainees; who is inexperienced in bidding and pricing; and who therefore has greater expenses.

Since it has been established that this is a program designed to aid residents of the area, and especially Blacks, it would be a simple matter for the Portland Development Commission to reverse this trend. Simply eliminate the bidding system; allot contracts with preference to minority contractors; allot contracts on a rotating basis to include all contractors and give all the same opportunity; make the entire procedure public so that each contractor as well as the public can see where the money is going.

There are special programs under which minority contractors are given contracts by federal agencies without bids to insure minority participation. These too can be misused if the same few contractors are given all the work. These contracts should be allotted fairly among all those contractors who are interested. Although it is good to see a Black business, grow to be large and profitable, this cannot be accomplished at the expense of the others.

Blacks alert to guilt

Recent polls show that 80 percent of the Black citizens of the United States believe President Nixon to be guilty of some crime, as compared to 34 percent of the total citizens polled.

It is not surprising to find Blacks to be disenchanted with the President and with government in general.

President Nixon has spent his five years in office chopping away at the few programs that are designed to help minorities. He has consistently attacked programs such as Model Cities, OEO, medical care, child care and education, legal aid, and others that might have some benefits for Blacks. He has been so ruthless in his attempt to shut down the War on Poverty Programs that he opposed Congress and broke the law.

While many whites accepted the "new Nixon" -- or they agreed with the things he sought to do -- Blacks saw through the facade.

Lack of faith in the President is only part of the picture. Blacks have good reason to be suspicious of government. The United States government has seldom come to the defense of its minority population -- its promises have seldom been fulfilled.

Even those programs that are designed to aid minorities benefit whites more than they do minorities. The good jobs generally go to whites and white business reaps the benefits.

Having experienced violence at the hands of the law, it is not difficult for Blacks to believe the President and the government of the United States to be capable of any crime.

Judge halts bombing

A federal judge has ruled that the bombing of Cambodia is illegal because Congress has not declared war on Cambodia and has not authorized the bombing. This ruling, if it stands, limits the President's power to that given by Congress.

A series of confrontations between President Nixon and Congress clearly shows that Congress opposes the bombing. Stipulations against the bombing were attached to a number of bills which the President then vetoed. A compromise was finally reached, with President Nixon agreeing to end the bombing on August 15th. No one knows whether he will keep this promise.

This court decision could be the first step toward restriction of the powers the president has taken upon himself and slow the rush toward facism.

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"BUT IT SEEMS REASONABLY CLEAR THAT CRIMES INCLUDES AT LEAST WIRE-TAPPING, THEFT, BURGLARY, BREAKING, AND ENTERING, PERJURY, MALFEASANCE IN OFFICE, SUBORNING PERJURY, BRIBERY, FORGERY, OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE, AND VARIOUS FORMS OF CONSPIRACY."
TOM WICKER, N.Y. TIMES



Law and order?

The North's turn to integrate

by Vernon Jordan, Jr.

Slowly, reluctantly, and under tremendous legal pressures, the South has desegregated most of its dual school systems. But all the while, complaints were voiced from some southerners who objected to the fact that their region was forced to desegregate while northern school districts weren't.

The historic Supreme Court decision in the Denver school case last month means that desegregation may finally cross the Mason-Dixon line.

Previous Supreme Court rulings affecting the South were based on segregated school systems created by state law. In Denver, however, racially isolated schools were created by the actions of the local school board. The High Court, by erasing the legalistic distinction between the sources of segregation and concentrating on the fact of segregation, opens the way for widespread desegregation of northern schools.

This is very important, because the vast majority of Black pupils in the North attend racially-segregated schools, and in some of the biggest cities less than one out of ten Black students attend predominantly white schools.

Technically, the Court's decision was to return the Denver case to a lower court for decision on the extent of officially-imposed segregation and to act on remedies. But the real meaning is to put northern cities on notice that they face the same legal compulsions the South faced some years back.

Two big issues in school segregation are still unresolved. One is the extent to which the Court will deal with school segregation resulting from segregated housing patterns. In a narrow sense, this does not result from legally-imposed actions by governments or local school boards. But since the results are similar, and since such authorities have the duty to take affirmative action to insure that their schools are integrated, even if neighborhoods are not, a good case can be made for Supreme Court-ordered integration.

The other dangling issue is whether the courts can order merger of urban and suburban school districts to achieve integrated schools. A case involving Richmond, Virginia ended in an inconclusive tie vote in May, but other cases, including one centered in Detroit, will be argued before the Court in the fall.

The Denver decision is a heartening indication that the Court's recent departures from the rulings of the progressive Warren Court will not be extended to the landmark school decisions. The Court has retreated on the rights of the accused in criminal cases and on civil

and personal liberties. But the 7 to 1 decision in the Denver case indicates there will be a rollback in the march of school desegregation decisions dating back to the **Brown** case of 1954 that ended legal school segregation.

The North is now very much in the position the South was in after the **Brown** decision. Back in the 1950's southerners were at least as opposed to desegregation as suburban Detroiters are today. But now there is general acceptance that segregated schools belong to the long dead past.

The basic reason for the change in attitude was the combination of firm national leadership that would allow no violation of constitutional rights, and the insistence of

the courts on compliance by local authorities. The North, too, can come to accept desegregation if it gets the leadership it needs, if the courts are as firm as they have been in the past, and if local authorities start now to plan for the transition period and beyond, before they have to do it in an atmosphere of panic and compulsion.

But perhaps the most important element here is national leadership that doesn't make a political football out of desegregation; leadership that sponsors attractive inducements to integrate and penalties for non-compliance; leadership that strikes the moral chord of the nation to help remove the racial barriers that foster hate and inequality.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Statistics questioned

Dear Sir:

I disagree with Mrs. Gladys McCoy's statement on page 6 of the July 19, 1973 **Portland Observer**: "We do have Black teachers now employed for every high school in the district..."

If "now" refers to the present, may I say that Cleveland High School does not operate summer school and consequently cannot be evaluated for now.

In the regular school term which ended May this year, there were no Afro-American classroom teachers at Cleveland High School. In the previous two years, there were no Afro-American classroom teachers.

Inasmuch as the status of public education is a valid community concern, a free press can best serve the community by providing accurate information. I have,

this date, contacted by telephone Mrs. McCoy and notified her of the inaccuracy of the above-mentioned statement in her article "Portland Public Schools and Minority Employment".

I trust that the **Portland Observer** will verify the status of Afro-American classroom teachers in Portland high schools and inform the public accordingly.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Osly J. Gates

[Editor's note: By her statement "We do now have Black teachers employed for every high school in the district," Mrs. McCoy refers to the fact that Black teachers have been assigned to the high schools for the school year 1973-1974.]

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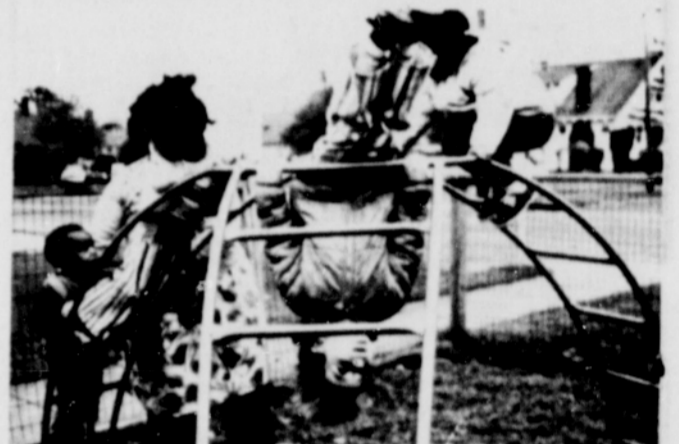
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Buying a car?

Some common sense thoughts in buying an automobile:

Everybody knows that Detroit is busy turning out the 1974 models. And everybody knows, or should know, that prices are NOT going down, but up, after the auto workers are given wage increases from at least 5 to 9 percent.

You will receive a better trade-in price on your used car now than you can ever get again. This is the ideal time to buy a new car.

It is ALWAYS easier to buy a new car than a used car. Why? Because you have longer to pay for a new car; you get a written and enforceable warranty; and you have more left when you trade it in than you do when you buy a used car.

What happened to the gasoline shortage? The same thing that happened to snow in July.

If you can afford an Impala, Fury, LTD, or Catalina, you can also afford the magnificent Mercury Marquis BROUGHAM.

Now let's talk turkey. If you are driving a T-Bird, Coupe de Ville, Electra 225 (deuce and a 1/4), Toronado, or even a New Yorker or Monaco, you are paying for a Mark IV Continental without the luxury and privilege of owning one. Come out to Walt Johnson Lincoln Mercury and find out just how really easy it is to drive a Lincoln Continental.

By the way, that "other" luxury car does not have the highest resale value. That belongs to the Mark IV and Lincoln Continental.

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