

D.K.A.

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MEMORANDUM TO THE SECRETARY OF LABOR
UNDER SECRETARY OF LABOR

I think that it is important at this time not to lose the momentum that has been achieved through the efforts of the President and this Department to make equal employment opportunity a reality in the construction industry. I am, therefore, recommending that area-wide affirmative action plans be implemented forthwith in San Francisco, St. Louis and Chicago. Hearings have been held in each of these cities, and there is no reason (except for the drafting process) why plans are not presently operational in these cities.

I am also recommending that hearings be scheduled for the city of Atlanta and that the machinery for collecting the necessary data for such hearings be set in motion. No city in the deep South (with the exception of New Orleans) has as yet negotiated an area-wide plan. The key to encouraging such negotiations would be an effective plan in the city of Atlanta.

There are a number of reasons for pursuing this course of action, and the more cogent are set forth herein below.

1. The new construction season will be upon us in another month. It is incumbent upon the Department to do everything possible to support one of the President's major civil rights programs.

2. With the present concern over keeping construction costs down, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance is experiencing increased pressure from all quarters to get on with the job of providing new job opportunities for minority workers in the construction industry.

3. Representatives of the black community, especially the National Association of Minority Contractors, Inc and its affiliated chapters, are becoming increasingly aware of the Department's role in carrying out the Administration's civil rights policies. This awareness is based on the positive approach which the Department has taken in proposing changes in the Manpower regulations governing on-the-job training programs and apprenticeship as well as the forceful role which the Department played in recommending the suspension of the Davis-Bacon Act. This awareness has led to increasing enthusiasm for Administration policies among minorities; this enthusiasm should not be dulled by neglecting the area-wide construction program.

4. The most recent figures on the Philadelphia Plan show that minorities are getting 15.3% of the man hours in the critical trades. Such reports make it increasingly evident that the plan is working in Philadelphia and that it will work in other cities.

5. The imposition of Philadelphia type plans in San Francisco, St. Louis and Chicago will hopefully prove to be the catalyst necessary to spur negotiations in other areas.

Since there is some urgency in this matter, I would like to discuss it with you on Monday - should your schedule permit.

ARTHUR A. FLETCHER

Arthur A. Fletcher
Assistant Secretary of Labor

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