



Fletcher receives the George Washington Honor Medal Award for 1969 from Burton Langhenry, regional vice-president of the Freedoms Foundation, as Mrs. Fletcher and Sec. of Labor G. P. Shultz look on.



A reporter listens as Fletcher explains a plan assuring equal employment opportunities for

there were complaints of racial discrimination, and conducted an on-site review of the working conditions there.

"I spent the whole day," he recalls, "crawling under those ships, talking to the brothers and finding out what they thought about their jobs and what the prospects of promotion were."

The company agreed to implement an affirmative action program that would remedy the discrimination problems at the shipyard as a result of Fletcher's investigation.

Bethlehem Steel agreed to:

- Promote persons in menial jobs to more desirable positions.
- Eliminate testing requirements for all employees who were hired before the testing procedure was instituted.
- Establish adequate timetables and goals for recruitment and placement of more black workers in white-collar positions.
- Review the job-classification system with the purpose of eliminating those features which tended to exclude blacks from first-class mechanic's jobs.
- The setting of targets, goals and timetables for promoting blacks to supervisory positions.

Before coming to the Labor Department, Fletcher was already working to improve the conditions of minority people in the state of Washington. As a member of Gov. Daniel J. Evans' Urban Affairs Advisory Council, he was a strong community leader and general manager and organizer of a self-help cooperative he helped build up in the slums of East Pasco, Washington.

Fletcher's self-help program worked in East Pasco and some of the things he imagined are becoming realities. The cooperative is operating a service station and a credit union and plans are being made for construction of a food store, a beauty shop, a barber shop, a dry cleaners and a bank.

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areas to revive themselves is through the same kind of self-help. To save America's decaying ghettos, he envisions applying an aid program to depressed neighborhoods similar to the nation's foreign aid system.

Having seen his mother, a college graduate certified as a nurse and a teacher, forced to work as a domestic servant because of discrimination Fletcher has dedicated himself to eliminating job discrimination in America.

He believes such discrimination is a major factor in the extremist thinking of many young blacks today, feeling, however, that extremism is not the right answer to the problems that thwart the hopes and aspirations of minorities.

With a stern look on his broad face that expresses determination to end discrimination and get minority people better jobs with measures available within America's democratic system, Fletcher warns:

"If another generation sees their parents suffer the same discrimination our children saw us suffer, if they see their parents denied the opportunity to use their capabilities to the fullest, then I think the ball game is over."

"I intend to see that we do not lose the ball game, to see to it that our sons and daughters do not face the barriers we faced, to see to it their children can grow up with pride and full opportunity."

Fletcher, who calls himself a "product of the ghetto," brings to his office at the Labor Department iron determination and boundless energy. His major role in development and implementation of the Philadelphia Plan, his investigation at the Bethlehem Steel shipyard in Baltimore and his work in the slums of East Pasco show he plans to use this energy and determination to try to help guarantee equal opportunity for all America's people so they can reap full the benefits of our social and economic