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Seattle, Washington 98102  
July 14, 1969

*Bevinage -  
copy of  
letter sent to  
your President.  
7/14/69*

Mr. Richard H. Nixon, President of the United States of America  
White House  
Washington, D.C.

Mr. President:

We know you are a very busy man, but we felt it most necessary to write you at this time after reading the July 17, 1969, edition of the "Jet" publication, and we quote:

" DIRKSEN NOW AFTER BLACK LABOR AIDE RULING?

The Nixon administration's biggest and most aggressive black sub-cabinetee, Asst. Labor Secy. Arthur Fletcher, a 244-pounder who stand six-foot four, faces expulsion from his job after announcing a stiff departmental policy for getting blacks in the nation's construction industry. Announcing that beginning on July 18th, he would enforce a quota system in all federal building contracts (above \$50,000) in the Philadelphia area, the ex-professional grid star immediately was criticized by a galaxy of forces headed by representatives of the AFL-CIO, the joint contractors council and Illinois GOP Sen. Everett Dirksen. The group urged a 45-day delay in enforcing the plan which orders contractors to state how many blacks will be used on the major federal building projects. Informed sources notified Fletcher that Dirksen had ordered a study of the program to see whether the "quota system is legal." "

It amazes us to see the Senior Senator from Illinois constantly being "up tight" all the time when it comes to moral issues, involving the rights of American citizens just because their skin coloring is different from his.

We are Negroes - we have been Republicans all our lives and want to continue to be. But, believe us it has been and will be worse to try and show the Black community what the Republican Party stands for as far as they are concerned - when Mr. Dirksen has constantly tried to and blocked many moves where we are concerned. We worked hard in your campaigns, and though we were opposed on every side, and most of the black people thought we had "fallen out of our tree" to support you - we continued on, assuring them their thoughts about you were wrong and asked them to give you a chance to prove them wrong.

Your record on appointments among minority people has been pretty good. We are sure there will be more along with upgrading in Federal employment. We were most happy when you made the wise choice as Assistant Secretary of Labor, Arthur A. Fletcher. We have been personally acquainted with Secretary Fletcher for many years and know

him to be a man "that is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, a man that can not be bought or sold, a man that will stand for right though the heavens fall." This man is second to none. He is not a man to be playing games for his own self esteem. He is a man that seems to have a direct line "to the Great Man above" and when things are bleak and the going gets rough - he asks for Divine Guidance - and in times like these - this is the kind of man the world needs. He is there to do a service for the nation. He is an asset to your administration.

Secretary Fletcher is doing a job that should have been done years ago and what is certainly morally right. Now, because someone or ones think he is 'upsetting the system' - they want him expelled from his job.

Mr. Fletcher is only upholding the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States - saying that all men regardless of their race, creed or color has a right to the pursuit of happiness, and this would include their being allowed to make a livelihood - with no holds barred.

We are sure you are aware of the low percentage of Blacks that are really actively involved in the construction work in this Country, as to being allowed to bid and work on large contracts over \$50,000. The so-called "do righters" Labor organizations both AFL-CIO - have seen to it that the Black man has not been permitted to make any head way in the nation's construction industry. Time would not permit for us to cite instances where they have been 'black-balled'.

Down through the history of America, because the Black man has been limited to his educational learning - he was taught to work with his hands - in all the trades used in the building world. So without a shadow of a doubt he is very superior there - but he has NOT been allowed to do so. Not only was he kept out of the Unions - but he was not allowed to bid on jobs - and was harassed and threatened in many instances. Then they put a 'stopper' on him - when they demanded 'performance bonds' on jobs. Where in the world can a black man put up a \$50,000 performance or any other - when you have to have a million dollars in assets to do so - now what Black man can do this?

Now all of a sudden the Labor unions, dear Mr. Dirksen and the joint contractors council is so worried that Secretary Fletcher's "Philadelphia Plan" is wrong - because a quota system is illegal, and they want 45 days to study the program. It is mighty funny after all these years of discriminating against a man because of the color of his skin and keeping him from making a living - they are now worried and have to study to see if the very same 'quota system' they have used all these years for their own - is now illegal. What a laugh!

Just because maybe the Lord has sent another 'Moses' to the world in the person of Secretary Fletcher - all the concern about a system. Don't they realize that if these people are allowed to have these jobs - it will take many a family off the

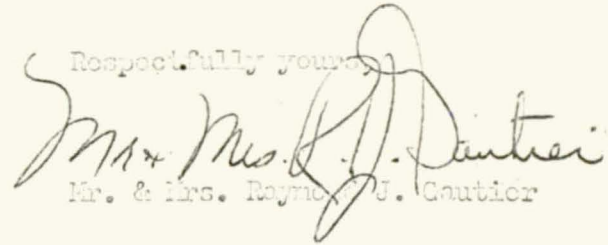
tax rolls of this nation and put them into the mainstream of life.

We do hope very sincerely, Mr. President, that you will back Mr. Fletcher all the way in his programs, which are certainly of benefit to this great Nation.

We pray each day that God will give you the strength and wisdom to keep on keeping on. We have had faith in you down through the years - don't let us down now.

Our very warmest regards to your lovely wife and daughters.

Respectfully yours,

  
Mrs. J. J. Cantier  
Mr. & Mrs. Ray J. Cantier

RJG/ang