

WATCHDOG OF LABOR *Continued*

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dedication, the same sense of purpose and the same setting of goals and timetables used, for instance, in the space program. It will require, in fact, a proclamation from President Nixon.

At the root of Fletcher's argument are Labor Department statistics showing there was general prosperity for most Americans during the 1950s and 1960s which was not shared by minorities. During those 20 years the gross national product went from \$284.8 billion to \$1 trillion. White unemployment was close to four per cent, which economists call "full" employment, while black unemployment dipped below six per cent only in 1952, 1953 and 1954. Thus, in 1968, 45 per cent of the nation's nonwhite families made under \$5,000 a year, as against only 20 per cent of the white families. Nonwhites got only 4.2 per cent of the jobs created by the \$26 billion space program and only 3.2 per cent of the jobs in the \$43 billion interstate highway building program.

The crucial question Fletcher raises concerns whether during the '70s nonwhites will receive their fair share of the 15 million new jobs that will be created by the rebuilding of the cities, the purification of the rivers and other major projects.

Recently Fletcher went on the CBS-TV show, *Face the Nation* and was baited with an opening question of how he felt as a black man in the Nixon Administration. "Certainly it presents a problem," he admitted, "but I have both an obligation and a responsibility to be as effective as I can in spite of claims, counter claims, charges, etc. So I keep my eyes and my mind on the ball, so to speak, and try to get as much as I can out of this Administration for the nation's nonwhite labor force."

Fletcher is prodded by his own life experience. He knows what it means to be unemployed and how that destroys a family. He knows what it means to hold two and three jobs at one time and neglect his youngsters as a result. He knows what it means to run a household alone. He knows never to look upon events in his life either as total victories or total defeats, for he sees a little defeat in every victory and a little victory in every defeat.

Life to him is, as the song says: "One day you have ham and bacon. The next day ain't nothing shakin'." He is not married to Washington, D.C. "There are people who come here and get caught up in the folderol, the pomp and prestige and all that goes with being a presidential appointee," Fletcher explains, "and they never want to leave. I'm not stuck on the job. As soon as I get through, I'm ready to sell my house, pack my clothes and get on back to the Pacific Northwest."

Until that time, Assistant Secretary Fletcher will continue to report for work at eight in the morning and spend his first few minutes reading the Sermon on the Mount. For him, it is a manual of instructions for living one's life. Like the minister he once wanted to be, he will constantly remind himself that the character built on sand will not survive the temptations of his office—the bribe attempts, the flirtations of women, the lure of power. And in his solitude, he will say with the Great Teacher: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

A dynamic speaker, Fletcher addresses groups all over the U. S. For the future he says: "I'm interested in developing some real estate back in the state of Washington. There are also some services in the construction industry one could make a good living at as an inde-

