

MARCH 1, 1989

PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH  
THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON, DC 20500

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:

ALTHOUGH BERNYCE AND I THANKED YOU AND MRS. BUSH FOR INCLUDING US AMONG THE GUESTS THAT YOU INVITED TO DINNER AND A MOVIE WHEN WE ARRIVED AND DEPARTED. LET ME TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SAY THANKS AGAIN. WE REALLY ENJOYED OURSELVES. THE DRINKS WERE SUPERB, THE FOOD WAS DELICIOUS, YOUR GUESTS WERE WARM AND CONGENIAL. AND THE MOVIE FIRST RATE. WHAT MORE COULD A COUNTRY COUPLE FROM ARIZONA, BY WAY OF OKLAHOMA, CALIFORNIA, KANSAS, PENNSYLVANIA AND WASHINGTON STATE ASK? (YOU DIDN'T KNOW THAT THERE WAS ANYONE AMONG BUSH SUPPORTERS WHO COULD CLAIM AS MANY HOME STATES AS YOU CAN, DID YOU?) NOW, FOR THE BUSINESS OF THIS LETTER.

HOPEFULLY YOU WILL RECALL MY SAYING THAT I WOULD LIKE TO BE SELECTED TO BECOME THE NEXT CHAIRMAN OF THE UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS. THIS LETTER IS PROMPTED BY THE FACT THAT CHASE UNTERMAYER CALLED ME THE VERY NEXT DAY TO EXPLORE THE DEPTH OF MY INTEREST IN THAT APPOINTMENT, AND I ASSURED HIM THAT I WAS FOR REAL, AND WOULD ACCEPT IT IF IT WERE OFFERED.

I ALSO BRIEFLY SHARED WITH HIM THE NATURE OF MY INTEREST IN BEING THE COMMISSION'S NEXT CHAIRMAN. HIS RESPONSE WAS "YOU ARE A PROSPECTIVE APPOINTEE WHO KNOWS WHY YOU WANT THE JOB, AND WHAT YOU WILL DO WITH IT." THAT'S GREAT! SINCE HE HAD THAT REACTION, I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL IF I SHARED MY CONCERNS AND INTEREST WITH YOU ALSO.

MY DESIRE TO BE THE CHAIRMAN OF THE U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS INCLUDES, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO THE FOLLOWING: WITH RESPECT TO THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT, THIS IS A VERY CRITICAL HOUR IN THE NATION'S HISTORY. THE RECENT SUPREME COURT RULING KNOCKING DOWN THE RICHMOND, VIRGINIA MINORITY BUSINESS SET-ASIDE PROGRAM IS A STATEMENT ABOUT THE CURRENT, POLITICAL CLIMATE AND AN INDICATION THAT THINGS COULD GET WORSE BEFORE THEY GET BETTER. THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE IF EXPERIENCED HANDS REMAIN ON THE SIDELINES AND LET THE TREND PROCEED UNABATED. A FEW MORE DECISIONS LIKE THAT ONE COULD PULL THE HEART OUT OF MINORITY INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, GROUPS, ETC., THAT HAVE BEEN AND ARE STILL STRUGGLING TO MOVE UP THE ACHIEVEMENT LADDER AND EXPERIENCE AN ENHANCED LEVEL OF CITIZENSHIP, AS WELL AS AN IMPROVED QUALITY OF LIFE.

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I WANT THE CHAIRMAN'S JOB BECAUSE I THINK MY APPOINTMENT WILL DIMINISH THE DEBILITATING DOUBT OCCASIONED BY THE RICHMOND DECISION SET BACK, AS WELL AS PROVIDE A BADLY NEEDED SPIRITUAL UPLIFT THROUGHOUT THE MINORITY COMMUNITY. I SAY THIS BECAUSE IT WILL INDICATE THAT THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION HASN'T BLINKED, NOR IS IT BACK-PEDDLING ON ITS COMMITMENT TO CIVIL RIGHTS, EMPLOYMENT AFFIRMATIVE ACTION, MINORITY BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY AND A HIGHER QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL OF THE NATION'S CITIZENS.

THE ABOVE ASSUMPTION IS VALID BECAUSE OF MY DIRECT INVOLVEMENT IN ISSUING AND IMPLEMENTING THE EMPLOYMENT AFFIRMATIVE ACTION INSTRUMENT IDENTIFIED AS THE REVISED PHILADELPHIA PLAN. YOU MAY OR MAY NOT KNOW THAT I WAS CHARGED WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY OF OVERSEEING THE DRAFTING OF THAT REGULATION, AND WAS THE ONLY FEDERAL OFFICIAL IN THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TO SIGN IT.

IN FACT, ONE OF THE PRIMARY ISSUES IN THE APPEALS COURT SUIT FOCUSED ON WHETHER A MERE ASSISTANT SECRETARY COULD SIGN AND ISSUE SUCH A FAR-REACHING REGULATION. THE COURT SAID YES, AND FROM THAT POINT ON THINGS AT AMERICA'S WORK PLACES HAVE NEVER BEEN THE SAME.

INCIDENTALLY, THE REVISED PHILADELPHIA PLAN WILL HAVE BEEN IN EXISTENCE TWENTY YEARS COME JUNE 27, 1989. IT WAS CALLED THE REVISED PHILADELPHIA PLAN BECAUSE THE ORIGINAL PHILADELPHIA PLAN WAS A VOLUNTARY PROGRAM, AND NEITHER THE CONTRACTORS NOR THE UNIONS WERE WILLING TO VOLUNTARILY COMPLY WITH A PLAN THAT HAD NO SPECIFICATIONS, OR STANDARDS, THAT DEFINED EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION OR INDICATED WHETHER A FIRM WAS IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE LAW; THE SPECIFICATION IN THEIR RESPECTIVE CONTRACTS WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE VARIOUS UNIONS AND CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTOR ASSOCIATIONS.

WE SUPPLIED THE GUIDELINES, SET THE PERFORMANCE SPECIFICATION, COMPLIANCE STANDARDS, ETC., WHEN WE ISSUED THE REVISED PHILADELPHIA PLAN. THAT BROUGHT AN END TO THE GAME PLAYING, GUESSING, EXCUSES, ETC. FROM THAT DAY TO THE PRESENT, GOVERNMENT CONTRACTORS HAVE HAD A FAIRLY CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT CONSTITUTED COMPLIANCE, AS WELL AS A FEEL FOR HOW TO ACHIEVE IT. IN SHORT, IF THE REVISED PHILADELPHIA PLAN SET THE EEO STANDARDS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY WHERE FEDERAL DOLLARS WERE CONCERNED, THOSE STANDARDS APPLIED WHEREVER FEDERAL DOLLARS WERE SPENT. THIS WAS (IS) THE CASE REGARDLESS OF THE PURPOSE OF THE CONTRACT OR THE INDUSTRIAL FIRM CONCERNED.

TO COME STRAIGHT TO THE POINT, THE REVISED PHILADELPHIA PLAN, WITH ITS ENFORCEMENT PROVISIONS, BROUGHT AN END TO DELIBERATE EXCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT, POLICIES, PRACTICES, AND PROCEDURES AT AMERICA'S WORK PLACES FOREVER. BECAUSE OF THIS, I CALL IT MY LEGACY, AS WELL AS MY FOOTNOTE IN HISTORY.

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BEFORE PROCEEDING, LET ME QUICKLY INDICATE THAT THE LEGAL INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE MINORITY BUSINESS SET-ASIDE PROGRAM IS A DIRECT OFFSHOOT FROM THE REVISED PHILADELPHIA PLAN. THUS, ITS IMPACT WASN'T LIMITED TO EMPLOYMENT ALONE.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO POINT OUT THAT FROM 1969 TO THE PRESENT, THE GENERATION THAT WAS ALREADY IN THE WORK PLACE IN THEIR EARLY DEVELOPMENT YEARS, AS WELL AS THOSE WHO HAVE ENTERED DURING THIS PERIOD, HAVE BENEFITED FROM THE INCLUSIONARY EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES THAT HAVE JUST ABOUT BECOME THE ORDER OF THE DAY AT THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE NATION'S WORK PLACES.

THE FACT THAT IT WORKED IS EVIDENT BECAUSE QUALIFIED WOMEN AND MINORITIES IN THEIR LATE 30S AND EARLY 40S HAVE MOVED UP TO THE VERY TOP IN THEIR RESPECTIVELY TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL FIELDS OF ENDEAVOR; SO MUCH SO THAT IN MANY CASES, EMPLOYERS ARE NOW WONDERING WHAT ALL THE FUSS WAS ABOUT.

FRANKLY, I DIDN'T THINK THE CHANGE WOULD OCCUR AND STABILIZE IN SUCH A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME. NOR DID I THINK I WOULD LIVE TO SEE AND EXPERIENCE BOTH THE CHANGE AND THE PROGRESS IN MY LIFE TIME. I HAVE BEEN BLESSED IN THAT NOT ONLY DID I SEE MY LEGACY TAKE ROOT, DEVELOP, GROW AND EXPAND BUT I HAVE ACTUALLY ENJOYED THE BENEFITS OF MY VISION AND FRUITS OF MY LABOR MYSELF. THESE PERSONAL EXPERIENCES HAVE SERVED TO DEEPEN MY FAITH AND CONFIDENCE IN THE COUNTRY, ITS PEOPLE, AND ITS FUTURE.

NOW FOR THE SOCRATIC QUESTION. IF THE UNITED STATES COULD BECOME THE WORLD'S NUMBER ONE ECONOMIC POWER WHILE USING ONLY A LIMITED PORTION OF ITS HUMAN RESOURCES, WHAT DO YOU THINK THE FUTURE HOLDS IN STORE NOW THAT IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE EDUCATE, TRAIN, DEVELOP, AND EMPLOY ALL OF THE NATION'S WORKERS TO THE VERY LIMITS OF THEIR CAPACITY TO CONTRIBUTE?

IN SHORT, THE INDUSTRIAL WORLD "AIN'T SEEN NOTHING YET."

LET ME EXPRESS MY VIEWS ANOTHER WAY. I HAVE OFTEN FELT THAT AT CRITICAL TIMES IN THE NATION'S HISTORY, GOD LAID HIS HANDS ON THE COUNTRIES' COLLECTIVE BODIES AND TOUCHED THE MINDS OF AMERICA'S PUBLIC POLICY MAKERS AND IN DOING SO PROVIDED THEM WITH A SPIRITUAL VISION OF THINGS TO COME LONG BEFORE THE NATURAL EYE COULD SEE THEM. THAT IN MY VIEW IS WHAT HAPPENED WHEN WE MOVED FORTH TWENTY YEARS AGO AND IMPLEMENTED THE EMPLOYMENT AFFIRMATIVE ACTION ENFORCEMENT MOVEMENT, WITH ONLY THE SKIMPIEST OF LEGAL LOGIC TO JUSTIFY OUR INITIAL ACTION. NEVERTHELESS, BY MOVING FORWARD FULL SPEED AHEAD, THE NATION'S EMPLOYERS GOT A JUMP ON TODAY'S REALITY.

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THUS, THEY HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN A GREAT DEAL ABOUT THE CAPABILITIES AS WELL AS THE PERFORMANCE SKILLS OF A WORK FORCE DOMINATED BY WOMEN AND RACIAL MINORITIES. THE PURPOSE WAS TO DISCOVER JUST HOW DEPENDABLE AND COMPETENT SUCH A WORK FORCE WOULD BE, SHOULD IT COME TO THAT. WELL, MY DEAR MR. PRESIDENT, THE BOTTOM LINE IS THAT IT HAS COME TO THAT.

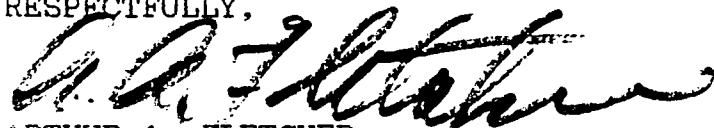
ACCORDING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, WORKFORCE 2000 STUDY, ON OR BEFORE THE TURN OF THE CENTURY, AMERICA'S WORK FORCE WILL BE DOMINATED BY WOMEN AND RACIAL MINORITIES. IN SHORT, FOR THE PAST TWENTY YEARS, BEGINNING WITH THE SIGNING OF THE REVISED PHILADELPHIA PLAN TO THE PRESENT, AWARE OF IT OR NOT, WE HAVE ENGAGED IN A DEMONSTRATION PROJECT VIA THE EMPLOYMENT AFFIRMATIVE ACTION ENFORCEMENT MOVEMENT, LEARNING ABOUT INDIVIDUAL, EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT LEVELS, TRAINING CAPACITY, SKILL DEVELOPMENT, AND TASK PERFORMANCE CAPABILITIES OF THE VERY ELEMENTS THAT NOW OR SOON WILL BE DOMINATING THE NATION'S WORK FORCE.

THUS, IT IS NO MYSTERY AS TO THE QUALITY OF WORK THEY CAN PRODUCE IF AND WHEN THEY ARE PROPERLY EDUCATED, TRAINED, EMPLOYED, AND REWARDED ACCORDING TO THEIR EFFORTS. BECAUSE OF THIS 20-YEAR BEFORE-THE-FACT DEMONSTRATION THAT THE NATION'S EMPLOYERS WERE FORCED TO PARTAKE OF, WE NOW NOT ONLY KNOW HOW WILLING THEY ARE TO COMPLETE BUT THE EXTENT TO WHICH THEY CAN HOLD THEIR OWN WITH THE BEST THE INDUSTRIAL WORLD HAS TO OFFER. THAT IS WHAT I MEAN BY A BEFORE-THE-FACT WARNING AND A BLESSED SPIRITUAL VISION.

I'LL CONCLUDE BY SAYING THAT HAVING HELPED LAY THE FOUNDATION THAT SET THE STAGE FOR THE PREVIOUSLY MENTIONED 20-YEAR DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM, I WOULD LIKE NOTHING BETTER THAN TO SERVE AS CHAIRMAN OF THE U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS WHERE I COULD ASSUME A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN PLANNING AND CARRYING OUT THE RESEARCH THAT WOULD POINT THE WAY TOWARD LAUNCHING THE FINAL PHASE OF THE NATION'S EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY REVOLUTION. IF WE DO OUR WORK WELL, THE COMMISSION SHOULD BE ABLE TO LAY THE GROUND WORK FOR REDUCING ALL FORMS OF GENDER, RACIAL, AND ETHNIC ORIGIN DISCRIMINATION, PLUS THE BEHAVIOR PATTERNS AND ATTITUDES THAT FLOW THEREFROM TO A LEVEL OF INSIGNIFICANCE.

YOUR PRESIDENCY START UP OPERATION HAS BEEN A CLASS ACT. BERNYCE AND I PRAY THAT YOU CONTINUE TO CALM THE TROUBLED WATERS, MAKE THE CROOKED PATH STRAIGHT, AND CUT THE MOUNTAINS DOWN TO MANAGEABLE SIZES, ALL WHILE EXPERIENCING GOOD HEALTH AND ENJOYING YOUR WORK IN THE PROCESS.

RESPECTFULLY,



ARTHUR A. FLETCHER