

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Office of Information
1823 Smith Tower Building
Seattle, Washington 98104
Phone: (206) 583-7621

JWK
OFFICE

Yakima, Wash Herald / 1/15

The time has come

Two years ago when former Pasco City Councilman Arthur A. Fletcher announced his candidacy for the lieutenant governorship of the state, he launched his campaign with a simple, effective philosophy: "Nothing is so powerful as an idea whose time has come."

Fletcher was narrowly defeated in his bid for the No. 2 spot in state government. But he did go on to become one of the highest ranking blacks in the Nixon administration as assistant secretary of labor.

As such, he will be directly responsible for enforcing the "Philadelphia Plan" requiring the employment of nonwhites on federal projects — if and when the plan overcomes efforts of contractors to stall it in Congress and the courts, and certain labor unions can be brought into compliance.

Like Fletcher, we think the concept of the Philadelphia Plan is, indeed, an idea whose time has come.

Fletcher points out that the heart of

the plan centers around a new approach to enforcing minority hiring provisions. Previous federal efforts to promote the employment of blacks, Mexicans and other minority groups failed because they depended on "voluntary compliance," Fletcher said.

"What we've done is draw the guidelines so voluntarism isn't the game any more," he added. "I see a trend building up here . . . the different branches of the government are going to back this plan. The courts are going to back it. It's going to work."

We view the plan as vital, not only because it eventually could provide jobs for four to seven million nonwhites "giving them enough income to afford the suburban homes to which open housing laws say they are entitled," but because of another valid Fletcher theory: The concepts embodied in the Philadelphia Plan could bring an end to economic discrimination in 10 years.