

# Council Spurs Negro Business

(Following is the latest report on a New York City project that is of vital importance to all Negro business men--and those who would like to enter the business world. It was written for the New York Herald Tribune by Ken McKenna and up-dates a previous article on the same subject that appeared in the VOICE several weeks ago.)

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TO THE AMERICAN NEGRO, business has always been his antagonist. Business was the guy who owned the store where he spent his pay. Business was the office where he didn't work. Business was the money he couldn't reach.

For a year, a non-profit organization called the Inter-racial Council for Business Opportunity has been pecking away at the problem, trying to assist Negroes in New York City to enter the business world on their own and prosper once they get there.

Successes have not been startling in a city that bulges with a Negro population of 1.3 million and yet has a mere dozen Negro-owned businesses employing more than 10 persons.

But the results have been encouraging enough to stir the active participation of 25 white business men who work part-time without compensation as consultants for the council.

"In some respects," one council official observed, "we probably have the largest man-

agement consultant business in New York."

For such an ambitious project, the pace necessarily is slow. The council will be releasing figures this week on its accomplishments this year. Inquiries from Negroes seeking assistance are coming in at the rate of 10 to 20 a week and cases on the books total more than 100.

UNDERLYING THE PROGRAM is the idea that for Negroes to attain equality, they must have money. Rodman Rockefeller, co-chairman of the inter-racial organization, commented, "To get a strong Negro community, you need a strong business community. We must give Negroes economic independence. With that comes stability and continuity and the capacity to get up on their own feet."

Noting the vast programs of American assistance directed abroad, Harvey C. Rullell, Negro vice-president of Pepsi-Cola Co. and co-chairman of the council with Mr. Rockefeller, pointed out that this is the first volunteer program of free technical assistance to an underdeveloped segment of the United States economy.

The inter-racial council is not a money-lending organization. It was founded by New York executives and sponsored by the Urban League and the American Jewish Congress. It has received grants from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund and the New York Foundation.

The organization is an advisory group that tries to shepherd Negro business men through the complexities of modern business. Naturally, the new business concerns opened by Negroes are mostly in the retail and service fields, although the ICBO counts a few manufacturers among its clients.

"Most people have some association with business--relatives, a friend," remarked Sam Sadin, one of the council's free consultants, "But Negroes have no background, no tradition. They don't have an uncle to call on the phone and ask, 'What do I do about this? We're here to fill the gap.'"

But filling the gap is not only leading a prospective Negro entrepreneur to the bank. The main job lies in teaching the individual, showing him where his shortcomings lie.

Realistic comment has become the council's strongest point. It has to be realistic to aid the Negro small businessman who often faces suspicion in trying to get even a small loan. Occasionally, a phone call from a council official will be enough to assure the loan.

But the inter-racial organization has been encouraged by one development. Despite the innate objections that Negroes have to business, many have shown a lively interest in trying their hand at the field. Once Civil Service and the professions were the Negro's only hope to better himself.

Albert C. Lasher, a member of the execu-

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Lloyd Sealey means more than one man with black skin in charge of a precinct. It is the attitude and the thinking of the white men who put Lloyd Sealey into the 28th which is important. Lloyd Sealey, they tell you in Harlem, means that the white man learned something last summer.

"They admitted they had been wrong and they did something about it," Paul Zuber, the attorney, was saying one afternoon. "That's the first time we've ever seen anybody do anything but talk. And maybe people around here feel just a little bit different."

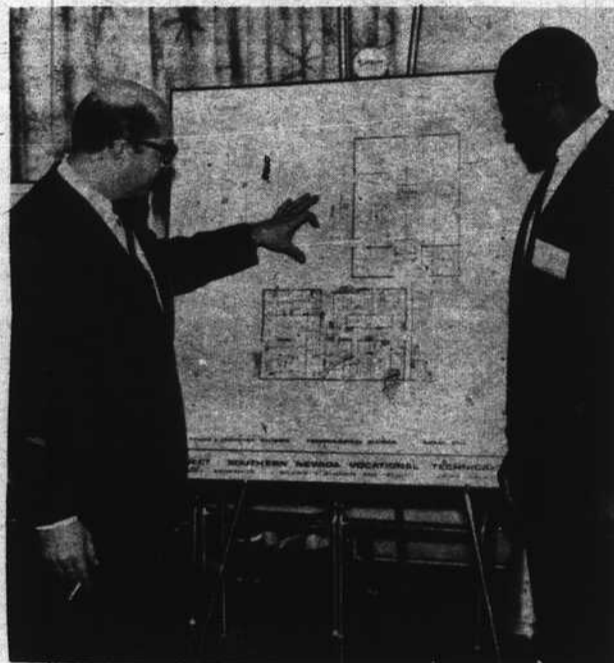
The difference shows in the streets. "They talk with you," the patrolman on 116th and Lenox was saying. "After last summer I thought all I'd ever get around here is the stare. But here they are, asking questions and saying hello. It's as close to a new world as we'll ever get up here."

(To Be Continued)



PUBLISHERS POW-POW--Among those attending Christmas Party for clients and suppliers of Clovis, Calif., News Printing Center at Parkside Inn in Fresno last week were (seated from left) Dr. and Mrs. Charles I. West, Las Vegas VOICE, and Mr. and Mrs. George Stegner, Zellerbach Paper Co.; (standing from left) Mr. and Mrs. Norman Johnson and Mr. and Mrs. William Callahan, News Printing Center hosts.

tive committee, observed, "Business used to be a dirty word. But a surprisingly large number of people have come in to us, wanting to get into business. We first thought our major job would be to stimulate the entrepreneurial spirit. But it's there."



TRAINING CENTER PLANS--Kit Carson School Principal H. P. Fitzgerald (right) was among more than 100 community educational, business and civic leaders who attended third planning session of Southern Nevada Vocational-Technical Center recently. Describing facilities is architect Julius Gabriele. Construction starts in 1965, with first classes scheduled for September, 1966.

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