

from the CAPITOL

By GOV. GRANT SAWYER



NEVADANS CAN TAKE justifiable pride in the record level of growth which has triggered our dynamic economic expansion during the 1960's. Today, we are the fastest-growing state in the nation, and the future holds the promise of even greater prosperity.

Not surprisingly, the blessings of unprecedented growth have not all been one-sided. Our rich harvest of human resources has created a great many critical problems which must be instantly recognized and acted upon with wisdom if we are to be equipped for the demands of the years ahead.

Chief among these problems is the proper utilization of our manpower. Nevada's prosperity will continue only so long as our labor force remains vigorous and healthy.

Last month's second statewide manpower conference at Lake Tahoe served to dramatize the challenge. During two days of deliberations, leaders of business and industry from all 17 counties, concluded that unemployment in Nevada during the next decade will not be caused by lack of jobs, but by a lack of qualified people to fill the jobs that will exist.

For example, conference participants--more than 130 in all--predicted that while statewide employment will increase 49 percent between now and 1975, the demand for professional and technical personnel will be far greater from a percentage standpoint.

Educators, doctors, dentists and other professionals will be in particular short supply, but there will also be a need for draftsmen, surveyors, stenographers and those who work in semi-skilled occupations.

NEVADA MUST ACT NOW in finding solutions to the problem of manpower shortages in these critical areas. We must undertake a thorough and judicious study of our educational programs, because it is an alarming fact that many employers are recruiting workers from other states because there are not enough Nevadans who possess the required skills.

At present, Nevada not only lacks a school of medicine and dentistry; it also is without a vocational-technical school where thousands of youngsters could learn skills that are vitally needed by private industry.

These are not problems which can be solved in a matter of weeks or months, but they are problems which must be solved if Nevada is to continue as the nation's growth leader.

It is not enough merely to meet the challenges before us today; we must also plan carefully for the welfare of future generations. Only by so doing can we avoid a catastrophic waste of our human resources.

White House Conference Report

(The following report is last of a series of articles on the August White House Conference on Equal Employment Opportunity attended by Bob Bailey, Chairman of Nevada's Equal Rights Commission, and VOICE publisher, Dr. Charles I. West.)

"Grudging Compliance" With Law Not Enough

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION was the subject of the final workshop of the White House Conference with Herman Edelsberg serving as panel chairman. Other panel members included Ed Hodges, Michigan Bell Telephone Co.; Fred Routh, National Association of Inter-Group Relations Officers; William Pollard and E. T. Kehr of the AFL-CIO Department of Civil Rights; Charles Wilson, California Fair Employment Practices Commission; P. B. Lewis of Plans for Progress; and Esther Peterson, Assistant Secretary of Labor.

In an opening statement that "affirmative action was activity beyond the 'letter' of the law", Chairman Edelsberg emphasized that the workshop was addressed "to those who are not satisfied with grudging compliance with the negative injunction 'do not commit and unfair employment practise after July 2' ". He challenged participants in the Conference to come to grips with the questions of what can be done to eliminate the effects of "institutionalized pre-existing discriminations".

Mr. Edelsberg asserted "These effects must be eliminated before minority groups in this nation are able, in fact, to move through the doorway of opportunity now opened to them in law by the Civil Rights Act". "The history and purpose of Title VII", Edelsberg said, "tells us that the law is designed, not only to end discrimination, but to create equal opportunity. This imposes responsibilities that do not permit us to ignore what happened before July 2, or what happens outside the employer's plant--e.g., community hostility or inferior segregated schools--to obstruct equality".

OTHER PANELISTS directed their remarks to a discussion of practical applications of affirmative action within their own experiences. One such example as voluntary group action to create a "climate of welcome" for previously disadvantaged minorities was cited as a proven method of affirmative action. Mentioned, also, was community responsibility to use the law as a tool for changing attitudes about discrimination and providing for genuine desegregation in public institutions. Representatives from labor and industry agreed that effective informational programs were necessary to implement the intent of the law; noting, further, that aggressive recruiting to counteract feeling of defeatism or timidity would also represent affirmative action.

Core Questions Representation

FLOYD McKISSICK, National Chairman of CORE, pointed out that the group invited to the Conference was representative of the well-educated middle and upper classes who, despite obvious concern, could not reach impoverished minority groups whose problems were being discussed. His argument was presented during an open discussion on the question of whether the conferees in attendance were capable of delivering their message to the "grass roots". McKissick suggested that minority groups be represented in the deliberations of the Equal Opportunity Commission in much the same way they are represented in the War on Poverty Program.

Housing and "Other Minority" Problems

TWO POINTS OF PARTICULAR interest to those participating in the discussion were fair housing and problems of other minority groups. Several questions were directed to the problem of eliminating restrictions on housing. It was suggested that employers interested in affirmative action assume responsibility for the devel-

opment of cooperative attitudes among realtors and community leaders. AFL-CIO representatives declared their willingness to "take housing problems on"; this was hailed as being indicative of the general desire to move forward to new areas of discrimination.

Representatives of the Mexican-American community complained that Administrators had tended to exclude non-Negro minority groups from benefits accruing to the Negro community. Others argued that limited participation in the Civil Rights struggle by such minority groups had resulted in law drawn for the solution of Negro problems.

It was also suggested that adoption of techniques employed by Negro civil rights groups be considered by those desiring a focus upon problems of other minority groups.

"POSITIVE" Approaches Advanced

OTHER POINTS of discussion sounded a more positive note. It was suggested that awards be given to pioneering companies in affirmative action and that a symbol be designed to promote recognition of participants in the Equal Employment Program. Also advanced was the suggestion that industry and labor employ idle funds in the development of integrated suburban housing.

Outstanding specific examples of affirmative action cited by the panelists and the conferees included:

BY MANAGEMENT:

1. The auditing of employment practices;
2. "Agressive recruiting in minority centers to process nominations for the promotion of minority employees;
3. Distribution of information on equal job opportunities.

BY LABOR:

1. The appointment of full-time civil rights directors in unions;
2. The desegregation of lines of promotion in union contracts;

BY VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS:

1. The use of church influences to obtain compliance with the intent of the law;
2. The auditing of vocational education programs to co-ordinate curriculum with job opportunity.

IN GENERAL THE CONFEREES agreed that there is a growing awareness that society has not discharged its obligation when it passes a law which opens the gates of opportunity, while still requiring some to carry on their backs the burden of inherited poverty and prejudice.

ADDITIONAL MINORITY IN-SERVICE TRAINING FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL

MORE THAN 200 classroom teachers, administrators and specialized personnel of the Clark County School District have begun additional in-service training on problems of minority youth.

The first in a total of 15 sessions planned was held at Clark High School, Saturday, Nov. 20. According to Dr. Caliguri, Special Coordinator of Equal Educational Opportunities In-Service Projects, sessions in the training program which includes human relations, curriculum development, materials and media and the community, will be held on alternate Saturdays carrying throughout the remainder of the school year, and ending May 28.

Scheduled as an important part of the total program are small group discussions on vital topics and problems of minority group students. Workshop and staff planning sessions programmed for the training course are provided for the promotion of increased understanding of participants in meeting and handling academic and social problems of disadvantaged students.

The November 20 initial session was highlighted by the appearance of Dr. Burton Henry, Professor of Iner-group Education at California State College, as keynote speaker. Clark County School District Superintendent, Dr. Leland Newcomer, delivered the opening remarks at the six-hour introductory session.

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