

Job Discrimination & Fair Employment

WASHINGTON - (NPI)--Who keeps Negroes in poor-paying jobs, or in none at all? The federal government came in for its share of the blame on two fronts last week.

On the one hand, the District of Columbia government was charged in more discrimination complaints than private industry during the past year. And on the other hand, the federal government was accused of subsidizing the sharecropper system which keeps thousands of Negroes, and poor whites, in virtual peonage in the South.

IN WASHINGTON, 70 complaints were registered with the District Human Relations Council against private establishments under the new fair employment practices ordinance. During the same period, 106 complaints charging discrimination within the city government were filed.

Ruth Bates Harris, the Human Relations Council's executive director, explained that government employees are generally more aware of their rights and more aggressive in protecting them than workers in private industry.

Meanwhile, a member of the U.S. Agriculture Department's Civil Rights Advisory committee charged that the new federal program subsidizing cotton crops amounts to a "licensed deal" to keep sharecroppers in peonage. Many sharecroppers find that if they don't turn over their federal checks to the owners of the plantations on which they work, they will lose the land on which they've worked all their lives.

THE LANDLORDS tell them to sign their checks over or be put off their land. And the sharecroppers remain under the thumb of the plantation owners as much as ever--if not more, since the landlords know from whence the tenant farmers' money comes.

At the same time, there were hopeful signs both in private industry and in government action of improvement in the job picture.

The major broadcasting networks--Westinghouse, American, Columbia and National Broadcasting companies--have launched a program to recruit, train, and employ Negroes and Puerto Ricans on a nationwide basis. But they reported that members of these minority groups often are skeptical about whether the networks really intend to practice fair employment. Feeling that fair employment doesn't apply to them, they don't apply.

IN CHICAGO, the Hawthorn-Melody Dairy agreed to more than double its Negro employment, after Operation Breadbasket officials launched a "selective buying campaign." Operation Breadbasket, organized Feb. 11, by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., has also induced Certified Grocers of Illinois and the Borden company to hire more Negroes.

IN LOS ANGELES, Neighborhood Youth Corps officials began an all-out drive to place 1,000 poverty-area dropouts into jobs that have gone begging. The dropouts, many of whom have become discouraged by previous enrollment red-tape, will almost have 32-hour-a-week, \$1.27 an hour jobs thrown at them. Transportation to and from jobs will be provided until they receive their first paychecks.

IN NEW YORK, Sen. Jacob K. Javits (R.-N.Y.) urged a \$35 billion "Marshall Plan" for Negroes and other minority groups. A national welfare allowance should be established to bring everyone above the \$3,000 poverty level, he said.

IN WASHINGTON, R. Sargent Shriver Jr., director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, predicted that American poverty will be at an end in 10 years. The nation's poor will be reduced from the present 32 million to 12 million in five years, he said.

IN CHARLOTTE, N.C., a suit was brought on behalf of 24 Negro employees of the Observer Transportation company, charging that Negroes were paid inferior wages and denied seniority rights. The suit, filed in Federal District Court, was brought under Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

Looks Helped Too!



Charm and vibrant personality won for Sonya Marlene Frank of Chicago the coveted "Miss Sepia" crown and a three-week trip to France and Italy. During her European jaunt, in addition to shopping, visiting famed Eiffel Tower, the French Opera House and the Royal Palace on the Champs Elysee, she, of course, visited as many quaint French restaurants as possible. Chef-owner Jacques Merqui is shown graciously playing the host at the des Banques restaurant in Paris, and serving California wine to Miss Sepia during her meal. (NPI Photo)

Jackie Robinson Has ANOTHER Job

NEW YORK - (NPI)--Multi-talented Jackie Robinson has added another title to his list of varied positions.

The former Brooklyn Dodgers great, he has been named director-co-chairman of the Hamilton Life Insurance company, New York, in which he has made a "substantial investment."

Robinson shelved his plan to organize an interracial life insurance company and instead decided to take a leadership role in Hamilton.

HIS MULTI-FACETED career began in 1947, when he became the first Negro to play in the major leagues. The year before, he had integrated the minor leagues.

Robinson, 47, was vice-president in charge of personnel with Chock Full O'Nuts, from 1957 to 1964.

He went on to become special assistant to Gov. Nelson Rockefeller for community affairs. Later, he was named general manager of the Brooklyn Football Dodgers of the Continental League.

Robinson has also been a newspaper columnist of note. As such, he has become well-known as a representative Negro leader.

"As long as Negroes are brought into the mainstream of American business, and young Negroes are encouraged by my career, that's all that counts," he has declared.

INTEGRATED ESCAPE

SAIGON, South Vietnam - (NPI)--Another of the stirring stories to come out of the Vietnam fighting was told last week when two Marines, one a Negro, recounted how they joined forces to overpower Vietcong guards and escape from a month-long captivity.

Heroes of this exploit were Sgt. James S. Dodson, 23-year-old York (Pa.) Negro; and Cpl. Walter W. Eckes, 20, New York. Dodson was captured near Danang, 375 miles northeast of Saigon on May 6. Eckes was taken into custody in the same general area on May 10. Both escaped on June 16 and reached safety on June 20.

IN RECOUNTING their story, which, except for the time of capture, was the same, the duet said they were confined in a small prison camp somewhere southwest of Danang. On or about June 14, they were marched by three guards to a different camp. Enroute, the twosome noted that their guards were careless in the handling of captured American-made carbines. Figuring this could be the break they needed, the two plotted an escape.

On the evening of June 16, while seated in a circle with the guards eating rice, the chance came. The guards had left their .36 calibre carbines leaning against a tree about 10 feet away. No better time than that existed. Dodson jumped up from the circle, sprinted to the tree, grabbed a carbine, cocked it, and whirled around. He had caught them flatfooted. The guards looked at him, and turned and fled.

The remainder of the tale was actually anticlimatic. After a two-day hike, they reached the outskirts of Danang, and finally walked into a small South Vietnamese army post.

See Who's Laughing All The Way To The Bank

NEW YORK - (NPI)--Batman and Robin have struck back again at their enemies, with a "pow," "bam," and a "kazang." And this time their "enemies" are a chain of New York merchandising organizations, accused of selling Batman merchandise that has not been properly licensed.

National Periodical Publications, Inc., which owns the copyrights and trademarks of Batman and Robin, filed suit against the firms--among them Walgreen's and Woolworth's--in an attempt to prevent unauthorized copies of Batman shirts, records, and other merchandise from being sold.

Batman hasn't exactly lost the shirt off his back, or the pants, as his products now retail for more than \$75 million a year.

Even Davy Crockett, Mary Poppins, and James Bond couldn't match that.

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