

JOBS GOING BEGGING

Remember the story about the plumber who presents his bill to the shocked homeowner. The homeowner comments, "With prices like these you should be a doctor." The plumber shoots back, "I was!"

The moral of the story points out what has been typical for years - skilled workers are at a premium. And, as the economy picks up steam, the demand for the trade and technically trained is taking up where it left off pre-recession. However, the demand for workers may, in fact, outstrip supply. A few months ago then-Secretary of Labor John Dunlop expressed fears that the scarcity of machinists, electricians, secretaries and others similarly skilled may, in fact, bottleneck recovery.

The by now legendary problem of too many Ph.D.'s and teachers and not enough plumbers recently encouraged the U.S. Department of Labor to remodel JOBFLO, a program originally set up to help returning Vietnam veterans, into a national computerized service which now pinpoints "Frequently Listed Openings" -- occupations with exceptionally high demand. A monthly report is published which lists about 200 such careers and is sent to high school counselors, educators and others instrumental in manpower planning with the goal of eventually attracting young people into these areas.

According to April's JOBFLO report (the latest one released by Labor), in high demand were auto mechanics, electronic technicians, computer programmers, machinists, arc welders and carpenters.

While jobs for liberal arts graduates have all but evaporated, the demand for those who specialize in a skill is flourishing as businesses recover from years of recession.

Terrorists Offer No Future To Black Africa

Dictator-President Idi Amin of Uganda had to know that he was playing with fire when he permitted his country to be a sanctuary for the hijackers of a French plane and its passengers.

The daring rescue by Israeli commandos of the 100 Jews held as hostages, and the killing of 20 Ugandan soldiers and the destruction of Ugandan planes, was a tragedy that could have been avoided.

Whatever the game Amin thought he was playing certainly back-fired. He gained nothing insofar as world opinion was concerned for his participation.

The hijacking of a plane and holding innocent people as hostages, in a diabolical plan to free prisoners, is obnoxious to any civilized human being.

African nations can ill afford to play footsie with Arab terrorists who can offer them nothing but trouble. Black Africa should have no part in the conflict between the Arabs and Israel. Their own internal needs are so great and complex, they need all the external help they can get. Importing trouble is the one thing they don't need. And this is about all the Arabs can offer them.

Amin's threat to declare war on Kenya, because Israeli planes of mercy were permitted to land there on their return trip, shows how bereft this despotic ruler is of any human virtues. The last thing Black African nations need is war against each other.

Emerging Black Africa, with its teeming millions in need of education and technical know-how to develop their resources, has much to learn about world cooperation and, what nations they can depend upon for real, constructive help. To the degree that they are smart in this perception, to the same degree will they progress.

**NOT A DESTINATION
LIFE IS A JOURNEY**

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

by Kenyon C. Burke

Kissinger at the National Urban League

How successful have we been in communicating to White America the aspirations and sensitivities of black people? Did the upheaval and disturbances of the 60's along with stacks of paper documenting numerous studies citing racism as the root cause of "urban unrest" send a clear message to the movers and shakers of American society?

Revealing insights into these questions emerged at the recent annual meeting of the National Urban League. In a history-making appearance, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, billed as the principal speaker, explained United States policy on majority rule in Africa and his feelings about blacks working in the State Department as employees as ambassadors to other countries.

Dr. Kissinger's invitation to, appearance at, and performance before the National Urban League Forum in Boston generated much emotion and caused considerable discomfort and uneasiness in many segments of our society. This was true especially on the part of most of the 8,000 delegates present at the convention.

Now that the dust has settled following this event, without the emotional energy of the convention perhaps we can examine what we gained from this experience. Indeed the historic and significant nature of being the first Secretary of State to address a national organization concerned with improving the quality of life for black people with a positive event.

Furthermore, the prestigious Urban League conference attracts the largest number of black sophisticated professionals of any organization in the United States. Those in attendance were mostly supportive of Dr. Kissinger's outlying of American foreign policy regarding Africa, which includes aiding the economic development of Black Africa and urging an end to apartheid and a start on black majority rule in Southern Africa.

In contrast, Dr. Kissinger's responses to questions about why so few blacks work in the State Department and why black ambassadors are apparently limited to assignment to Africa and the Caribbean countries fell far short of what the from this experience. Indeed the historic and audience expected and were willing to accept in 1976.

Twenty years ago corporation presidents were heard saying that it's difficult to find qualified blacks and the "complicated" examinations prevent us from increasing their ranks with minority employees, especially in technical and managerial positions.

It's not surprising that this staid audience, which consisted mostly of black professionals, hissed and booed the Secretary of State for offering up these unacceptable and outdated excuses for the low number of blacks employed by the State Department.

While several Urban League officials attributed the unpopular Kissinger replies to "a lack of sensitivity" and "a lack of specific knowledge" of Black America, his comments cause us to raise more questions.

Why would the Secretary of State come to the largest forum on race relations in America and not be adequately prepared to respond to questions on Affirmative Action? Is there something unique about the Department of State that causes them to lag far behind other governmental agencies in the hiring of minorities?

State Department statistics show that since 1949, 23 blacks have been assigned Ambassador and that all but five were assigned to Black Africa or to the Caribbean. The Department has 12,247 employees, of which 1,585 are black. Of the 5,799 Federal Service officers and employees in professional ranks, 262 are black.

We hope that the offer of assistance by Vernon Jordan, executive director of the National Urban League, to suggest ways in which the national civil rights organization could help on the State Department's recruitment and upgrading of blacks and other minority group members will be taken seriously.

All this points to the fact that equality of opportunity has yet to be realized in many sectors of our country and especially in the prestigious U.S. Department of State.

Business in the Black (Continued from page 2.) self because of physical or mental illness (dependent in this context means any dependent who received more than half of his support from the taxpayer) but a dependency exemption is not required, finally either spouse who is unable to care for his/herself because of mental or physical illness.

One other limitation on the deduction is the gross income of the taxpayer. After the taxpayer earnings hit \$18,000 the deduction is reduced by 50 cents for each dollar over the \$18,000. Also remember no deduction is permitted for expenses paid to individuals who are related to the taxpayer, spouse or dependent household members.

This is an important item for black families and argues for founding string community child and/or adult care centers in churches, cooperatives, cultural centers, etc.

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