

Credo For Justice And Equity

Whereas, the federal government of the United States of America recognizes that our nation is comprised on the one hand, of a large majority "melting pot" of ethnic groups, who can identify as White, and, on the other hand, of "affected class" minorities (largely Black), "who by virtue of past discrimination, continue to suffer the present effects of that discrimination" in a manner that has not allowed these "affected class" persons to participate fully in the American experience...And, whereas, Black people in America and elsewhere are beginning to recognize more and more that the longstanding oppression to which they have been subjected for so many centuries has been based solely on racial identity...with little or no distinctions made to the educational attainments, economic status, or other merits of the individual...And, whereas, Black people everywhere recognize that, since this discrimination and denial have been applied to them as a group, they must unite as a group in many ways to help overcome these conditions...And, whereas, our federal government and others are beginning to recognize that deliberate and systematic use of race as a weapon to exclude Blacks and certain other minorities from the economic mainstream of American life has resulted in economic, psychological and political damage, not only to Blacks, but also to the peace and productivity of the nation...And, whereas, to overcome these historic and tragic injustices...and to build equity for all, major corporations and others in economic control have begun to realize that compensatory or "make-up" adjustments have to be made by every institution in America, if any of us hope to live together harmoniously and without fear...And, whereas, Black experiences with long-suffering make them more acutely concerned that all citizens (White and Black) should be treated fairly and that oppressed peoples must receive long overdue consideration in educational, job and other economic opportunities...And whereas, businesspersons, firefighters, police officers, teachers and others who do not live within our communities have great difficulty in demonstrating regard for the reasonable and deserved needs of our communities...And whereas, we recognize that all persons (Black and White) are linked together for survival and all of us will suffer from the great economic and needlessly inhumane costs unless we all strive together for equitable changes...

THEREFORE, as citizens who understand that we can never realize the full promise of America until all Blacks and other oppressed minorities are empowered to shoulder their own responsibility in a peer relation with others via 1) genuine self-awareness, 2) keener insights into the realities of our society and 3) vastly improved economic opportunities, **we pledge the following as a means of helping to make our society more just and equitable for all Americans—both Black and White:**

1. that, for a more rapid shift toward psychological and economic freedom for our community whereas comparable values are available with reasonable convenience, all of our needs for goods and services will be serviced from within "affected class" communities and/or from those enterprises that provide the most benefits to those communities as a whole...

2. that, to insure the best possible education for our youth and to insure the best police and fire protection, we will insist that only those who, along with their families, live within our communities, be able to serve as teachers, police officers or firefighters for our communities...

3. that, for redemptive and equity-building purposes, we will encourage group unity, promote community control and work in nonviolent but aggressive ways for survival and growth of our people on all fronts and in our nation...particularly with programs oriented for our youth like the national Assault On Illiteracy Program (AOIP)...

4. that, on the basis of the simple equity needed to achieve peaceful and harmonious relationships among all in this nation, we will make every effort possible to encourage employers to employ more minorities and engage more minority contractors on an equitable basis...as long as these minority contractors have as a primary goal the strengthening of "affected class" communities...

5. that, since community media are a major voice for community uplift, we will support those who support our true leadership voices...and will actively discourage support for any media that purport to represent us but are not owned from within our community and accountable to the Black community...

6. that, inasmuch as the only area remaining open to Blacks for quickly and easily establishing economic equity is their own community, if any company should engage in any new venture that is ethnic related, we will encourage them to join with Blacks and other "affected class" minorities in developing the project in a manner that is mutually beneficial...

7. that, for the continued economic survival of Blacks, we will encourage Black business and professional people to support in every possible way those institutions committed to work for the principles of this pledge...

8. that, to reduce the unconscionable 47 percent "functional illiteracy" rate among our young adults that may assign many Black persons permanently to lives of welfare, drugs, crime, etc., we will join others in sponsoring provenly-productive programs like that of the national Assault On Illiteracy Program (AOIP) now being supported by many Black newspaper publishers...

9. that, for simple self-respect, and for the development of group strength, we will work to strengthen our educational system, develop our own community organizations like the National Black Leadership Roundtable, National Business League local chapters, National Council for Policy Review (NCPRI) affiliates, SCLC, local Opportunities Industrialization Centers (OIC), People United to Save Humanity (PUSH), local NAACP chapters, local United Black Funds, local fraternities and sororities, community-building efforts and our local, state and national legislators—particularly the members of the Congressional Black Caucus—etc. And finally...

10. that, because the Black Church (along with the Black-owned press) has been in the forefront of the struggle for freedom and dignity for all people in this nation, and because the community needs the moral strength that it imparts, we will do all we can to support it financially and otherwise even if we live in other communities and cannot regularly attend...for, this is chief among the precious Black institutions.

(Are you spending your dollars with Black hair care makers and beauticians and supporting all other Black businesses, Black professionals, Black churches, Black organizations and other Black institutions on a priority basis?)

Have you made plans to participate in the Congressional Black Caucus Week (September 22-26) in Washington, D.C.? Information regarding participation may be obtained by calling (202) 226-7790.