

BUSINESS

'H1-B shuffle' stiffs minorities out of well-paying jobs

*John William Templeton
Special to Sentinel-Voice*

Don't be surprised to see someone from a public relations firm walk into your local community center or school offering a few computers during the next several weeks. And don't get too excited either.

The equipment is likely to be outdated or unsaleable, although they will bring cameras and video tape to record the donation. So, why are they there? To perform the annual, maybe semi-annual, mating dance with

Congress called the "H1-B shuffle."

That is a program in which American companies, universities and government agencies can hire professionals from foreign countries after they "attest" that no Americans are available for those jobs. Certainly, most of the 800,000 African-Americans with graduate degrees or three million with bachelor's degrees would be surprised to know that there is a shortage of well-qualified people.

These H1-B Visas are most prized by the high technology industry, which gave lavish campaign contributions to former House Speaker Newt Gingrich and a \$600,000 fundraiser for President Clinton last fall to overcome the opposition of the Congressional Black Caucus led by Reps. Mel Watt, D-N.C., and John Conyers, D-Mich., the AFL-CIO and engineering professional groups.

Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, even held up the measure with

a parliamentary maneuver. But the American Competitiveness Workforce Improvement Act was inserted in the federal budget in a deal between Gingrich and Clinton. It raised the "quota" of workers from 95,000 yearly to 155,000. Remember that word quota.

I recently visited the U.S. Department of Labor office in San Francisco that processes one of the two forms required for each H1-B application. This form, a Labor Condition Application, tells the agency no American

is available for a specific job. The San Francisco office, which serves Silicon Valley, receives 6,000 of these applications each month. It is now implementing an automated fax system for the applications with a seven-day guaranteed response.

As long as the proper boxes are checked, there is no review of the attestation, although it does carry a possible \$10,000 fine and five-year jail term for knowingly furnishing false information. If you or I apply for a passport, we have to

prove we are citizens (even if we've never left the country before) and wait as long as two months to get one. If we file a complaint of employment discrimination with the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission or Office of Federal Contract Compliance, it can take a year just to get an acknowledgment of receipt of the information.

More relevantly, companies that are found to discriminate are not made known to the office that (See High-tech, Page 16)

"I envision a bridge..." The African-American Summit 1999

Special to Sentinel-Voice

Designed to bring enterprising Africans and African-Americans together to focus on economic opportunity, empowerment and outreach to enhance the future of both, the fifth African-American Summit looms as the place to be for blacks seeking to mold their own flourishing communities. Scheduled for May 15-22, 1999 in Accra, Ghana, West Africa, the Summit's main emphasis will be: Education democracy and business investment and economic development, particularly in health and agriculture. Convened by Rev. Leon Sullivan, the Summit's primary

initiative will be to bring together private-sector businesses and investment promotion organizations from Africa, North America and Asia to identify and solidify business and procurement opportunities in Africa.

As the second largest continent in the world, with tremendous untapped mineral resources, over 600 million people, and one of the youngest and fastest growing populations in the world, Africa offers a tremendous market. It is also a market that remains largely unexplored, with many natural resources that are unrefined and human resources that have yet to be

Business Exchange



*By William Reed,
Publisher of Who's Who in
Black Corporate America.*

harnessed in a positive way. And, if there is a leader that can build a bridge between Africa's and Black America's economic potential it is Rev. Sullivan.

Over 10,000 people have followed Sullivan in his eight years of economic bridge-building in Africa. And, for good reasons. He is a minister

who keeps hope alive with direct and definite actions. In 1958 Sullivan led over 400 ministers and their congregations in the "Tastycake boycotts" against Philadelphia merchants who refused to employ blacks, a movement that led to thousands of jobs for people of color. In 1962, he

established Progressive Investment Associates, a savings cooperative that built the first and largest shopping center in an urban area owned by blacks. In 1964, Sullivan founded the renowned Opportunities Industrialization Centers (OIC), with comprehensive programs in 130 cities that facilitated jobs training for more than 800,000 people of color.

A man of action behind and in front of the pulpit,

Sullivan was named one of 100 outstanding people in America in 1964 by LIFE magazine. As the first African-American elected to the Board of Directors of General Motors, he appeared on the cover of Business Week in March 1971. During his years on GM's board, Sullivan set the mold for African-American participation in a multinational corporation's (See Summit, Page 16)

Carefully decide between fixed and adjustable mortgages

Special to Sentinel-Voice

Making the best choice among the financing options being offered means taking a careful look at your housing and financial goals.

Is the amount of the monthly payment the most important consideration in your financial planning? Are security and stability chief among your needs, or do you have the flexibility to allow your interest rates to follow the market?

There is not one single right answer for everybody. Of course, each individual family will have its own needs and its own requirements.

Primarily, the choice you make between a fixed-rate and an adjustable-rate mortgage will affect your monthly payments over the life of the loan. Make this decision after carefully considering your estimates of income and expenditures for the term of ownership you contemplate, whether it be

Real Estate Perspective



*By Loretta Arrington
Licensed Real Estate Broker*

short, long, or lifetime. To be certain that the monthly payment for principal and interest will not vary during the term of your mortgage, choose a fixed-rate loan. This is especially advisable if you anticipate small increase in future income. The longer you plan to hold on to your property, the more likely you are to benefit from a fixed-rate mortgage.

If you expect to sell within five years or less, or if you expect interest rates to go down, the ARM or adjustable rate mortgage, with its rate-changing features, might be more appealing. The principal advantage of an ARM for short-term home

buyers is that the initial interest is usually lower than the best rate available on a fixed-rate mortgage.

Contact your lender for additional information on the adjustable and fixed mortgages for their current rates. Your lender will be happy to answer any of your

questions.

However, make sure you understand fully the terms and conditions on any loan before you sign on the dotted line.

As always, please contact a professional for all your Real Estate needs or write to me c/o Real Estate Perspective, Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice Newspaper, 900 East Charleston Boulevard, Las Vegas, Nevada 89104 or E-Mail me at griot@vegas.infi.net.

*Loretta Arrington, Owner/
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Associates Realty Group and
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*Regional Transportation Commission
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**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR
APPOINTMENT TO TWO RTC
ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

➤ **CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) advises the Commission on issues related to mass transportation, street and highway construction, transportation demand management, air quality, and other issues as may arise from time to time.

➤ **OLDER AMERICANS/DISABILITIES
TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY
COMMITTEE**

The Older Americans/Disabilities Transportation Advisory Committee (OA/DTA) advises the Commission on issues of interest to older Americans and persons with disabilities, including fixed route and paratransit bus services.

These unpaid appointments are for two-year terms beginning July 1, 1999. The committees meet once each month, at 5:30 p.m. on a Wednesday (for the CAC) and at 1:30 p.m. on a Tuesday (for the OA/DTA.) **Persons interested in serving on one of these committees should request an application from:**

Michael Born, Senior Planner
(702) 455-5776 • e-mail: bormmm@co.clark.nv.us

**Your completed application should reach the
RTC no later than Friday, May 21, 1999.**

Kurt Weinrich, Director
Regional Transportation Commission
301 E. Clark Ave., Suite 300, Las Vegas, NV 89101
(702) 455-4481 • TDD 455-5997

