President reaches out for blacks

(Continued from P. 50)
grant and contract authority to business development organizations.

In 1971, 35 OMBD-affiliated local business development organizations obtained almost $50 million of funding for over 1,100 minority business ventures.

The Small Business Administration has also been working to assist minority-group Americans, achieving significant increases in both federal contract awards and business loans.

Minority businesses are now receiving 19 per cent of the SBA dollar — more than double the proportion in 1968.

ELIZABETH KOONTZ

Another way in which minority business ownership has been promoted is the Minority Enterprise Small Business Investment Company program.

VENTURE CAPITAL

Forty-nine MESBICs have been licensed since 1969 to provide venture capital to minority enterprises. More than $200 million is now available to minority businesses through this program.

And in late 1970 the Administration began a combined public-private sector program to increase minority bank deposits by $100 million.

By June 30, 1972, this goal had been reached four times over, with deposits increasing by $429 million — an expansion of 108 per cent.

DRAMATIC PROGRESS

Dramatic progress has also been made on the housing front, both in terms of increasing the supply of low and moderate income housing and attacking housing discrimination.

Federally-assisted housing starts for low and moderate income families are expected to increase almost four-fold from 156,000 in fiscal year 1969 to 566,000 in fiscal year 1973.

And more than 100 suits have been brought by the Justice Department to correct the effects of housing discrimination in the past and maximize equality of opportunity in the future.

SAMUEL PIERCE JR.

BEN HOLMAN

GLORIA TOOTE

It has been under the Nixon Administration, too, that minorities have finally received equal voting rights.

In 1970 the President signed into law new amendments to the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

AMENDED LAW

Under the amended law more than one million minority members have registered to vote for the first time.

The Justice Department has maintained continued vigilance to ensure that the rights affirmed by this act are upheld.

The President's record is, as we have seen, one of concrete accomplishment for Blacks.

FORCEFULLY PURSUED

Our nation's historic goal of a free and open society has not just been given lip-service under this Administration — it has been actively and forcefully pursued.

The President has pledged to continue to devote vigorous efforts to ending racial discrimination and achieving equal opportunity for all Americans.

In his words: "These efforts will all go forward — with vigor and with conviction. Making up for the years of past discrimination is not simply something white Americans owe to Black Americans — it is something the entire Nation owes to itself."

GEORGE HALEY

JAMES E. JOHNSON

VOLUNTARY COMPLIANCE

In addition, more than 180 voluntary compliance agreements have been negotiated.

STANLEY THOMAS JR.

CHRIS ROGGERSON JR.

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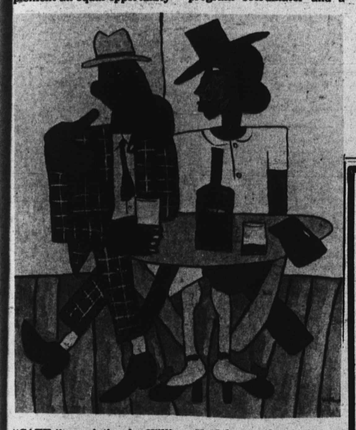
NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY

Smithsonian And Blacks

WASHINGTON, D.C. — With a newly appointed, activist Equal Employment Opportunity director at the helm, the Smithsonian Institution has begun to implement an equal opportunity action plan that the director calls "one of the best I have seen."


"CAFE," a painting by William H. Johnson, done in oil on masonite, in 1939 or 1940, is included in the National Collection of Fine Arts' recent retrospective of the work of this little known artist.

Archie D. Grimmett, former director of personnel for the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, came to the Smithsonian in June and has has already taken positive steps toward opening up opportunities in what is one of the most diverse operations in the federal government.

The Smithsonian, which is at the same time both a federal and private opration, is one of the world's largest museum complexes as well as a center for research in science, history and the arts.

Multitude of Disciplines

Its staff includes a multitude of disciplines, such as librarians, artists, craftsmen, botanists, zoologists and historians in addition to the range of administrative personnel needed to run any government agency.

Most, but not all, of the jobs are under the Civil Service.

Mr. Grimmett has appointed 16 counselors throughout the Institution, who are being trained to help resolve complaints of employees or applicants who feel they have been victims of discrimination because of their race, color, religion, sex or national origin.

Resolve Complaints

The counselors, who all work full time at other jobs within the Institution, will attempt to resolve complaints informally and will report regularly to the director of Equal Employment.

In addition to the counselors, Mr. Grimmett has appointed two investigators to research formal complaints.

He will expand his full-time staff with a federal women's program coordinator and a civil rights specialist who will assure that Smithsonian programs comply with Title 6 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Community Relations

"Our main concerns will be with community Relations, upward mobility, and recruitment," Mr. Grimmett says.

"We will be working to make Black people in the surrounding community aware of the educational and recreational opportunities here and encouraging them to participate.

"In regard to upward mobility, we are trying to identify both deadend positions and 'bridge' positions, the transition positions between clerical and professional jobs."

Mr. Grimmett, continued, "And in recruiting, we are trying to create an image for the Smithsonian that will make Black people and other minorities confident and eager to apply here.

Total Commitment

"We have the total commitment of top management to implementation of this action plan.

"We will be working with supervisors to make them more sensitive to the needs of their employees and to measure how effectively they are applying the action plan to their operations.

"I am confident that the plan will be successfully enforced."

Upward Mobility

Another tool for upward mobility and increased opportunity is the new Smithsonian Learning Lab.

Organized by the Institution's personnel office, the lab is a training center to help employees upgrade skills or acquire new ones.

The lab offers free one-hour courses every day in beginning typing, office typing, beginning shorthand, speed shorthand, career arithmetic, blueprint reading and shop mathematics, basic statistics, and career English. Other courses will be added if there is demand for them.

Own Rates

The programs are individualized so that students can progress at their own rates. Supervisors are encouraged to make it possible for their employees to participate in the training programs. More than 200 students have already enrolled.

Opportunities for Black people at the Smithsonian go beyond the employment field.

Following its mandate as an "establishment for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men," the Smithsonian is primarily an educational institution.

ARCHIE GRIMMETT
Smithsonian EEO director

Special Services

Its museums are free to all.

In addition the Smithsonian can provide special services to students and scholars. Most of the 65 million catalogued objects are not on display, but in study collections where they can be used for research.

Persons working on special projects, such as a master's thesis or a serious hobby

(Continued on P. 63)

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