

The civil defense commission has six members. No blacks.

The county welfare services commission has 14 members. No blacks.

And it just goes on and on. So that's—

MR. POWELL. This is in a community where during the last 20 years the black population has consistently been about 35 percent of the total. Is that correct?

MR. BLEVEANS. That's correct. And I would offer on that point in connection with the lawsuits we have pending I secured a statement from the Director of the Census, Mr. Brown, which states the population by race for the county and the city as compiled from the censuses of 1950, 1960, and 1970, which I would share with you if you'd like.

MR. POWELL. May we have that for the record?

MR. BLEVEANS. You certainly may.

(Whereupon, the document referred to was marked Exhibit No. 16 and received in evidence.)

MR. POWELL. Mr. Bleveans, how are members appointed to local boards and commissions?

MR. BLEVEANS. Well, it depends on the board, but you could say generally that city boards—the members of city boards—are appointed by the mayor with the consent of the city council.

County boards are usually appointed by the chairman of the county commissioners, sometimes with, sometimes without, the consent of the other two commission members.

There are a few that are appointed by other people. For instance, the airport authority, if you noticed our airport out north of town, that has five members. All of those are white. That board is appointed partly by the circuit court of Alexander County and partly by the mayor of the city of Cairo, so it's mixed.

But generally it's either mayor's appointments, county commissioners' appointments, or a combination.

MR. POWELL. Are public announcements generally made to inform the citizens of Cairo when vacancies exist on these public bodies?

MR. BLEVEANS. No. And that is also part of the public record, because it's been filed in the court. Part of the proposed decree that we filed in both of these cases, the housing authority and also the public utility commission, we have asked the court to require publication of this sort so that people know when these appointments are coming up, when the vacancies are occurring, so that interested people and groups can provide names of people that would serve and accept appointments.

MR. POWELL. Mr. Bleveans, as I understand it, you have compiled statistics reflecting the employment policies of the public utilities commission. Again drawing only upon information of public record, would you please summarize these statistics for us?

MR. BLEVEANS. Yes, and it's very easy. They have 25 employees and all of them are white. And this is in a city that this exhibit I provide you shows as of 1970 had a population of 37.4 or 37.5 black. And they have no black employees.

MR. POWELL. Does this public utilities commission have any educational or physical qualifications that you are aware of which would account for its failure to hire black employees?

MR. BLEVEANS. I will refer for that answer to answers to interrogatories that were filed in the suit, and the answers were of course filed, and those are also public record. There haven't been any—at least since 1967 and as I recall that's how our interrogatory was framed—there haven't been any educational requirements for employment nor have there been any height, weight, or sight requirements or preferences for employment by the public utility commission.

MR. POWELL. Has your office also compiled statistics regarding the employment policies of the county housing authority, Mr. Blevens?

MR. BLEVEANS. Well, pursuant and in connection with the lawsuit, yes, we have, and those facts are also of record, public record.

MR. POWELL. Would you summarize that for us?

MR. BLEVEANS. Well, the housing authority as far as I can tell—and let me just read you a part of a document entitled "Pretrial Submission" which is on file with this court. It says, "At least"—and this was drawn from answers to interrogatories, by the way—"At least since November 18, 1959 the Authority has not advertised any job openings in the Authority work force. The Authority has not solicited new employees through the use of union referral services, private employment agencies, newspaper advertisements, or the Illinois State Employment Service, nor has any representative of the Authority visited or contacted any union, school, college, training-work experience or other sort of agency for employees."

So my experience in Title VII cases when I was with the Government was that generally employers sought employees through word of mouth. Present employees tell their friends there's an opening, and then they go fill it. And although it's not of record, I speculate that that same thing may pertain here.

MR. POWELL. Mr. Blevens, does the housing authority have a written program of equal employment opportunity?

MR. BLEVEANS. Part of their contract with HUD—I can't recall the exact section of the contract; it's called an annual contributions contract—states that, well, at least in employment matters anyway, in hiring—it's the usual Federal language about, you know, they won't discriminate.

MR. POWELL. Are there any specified educational requirements for positions with the authority, Mr. Blevens?

MR. BLEVEANS. Educational requirements, no.

MR. POWELL. Madam Chairman, I have no further questions.

COMMISSIONER FREEMAN. Commissioner Mitchell?

COMMISSIONER MITCHELL. Mr. Blevens, one of the more heavily federally subsidized industries would be I should think, especially in this area, that which takes place up and down the river—river traffic, barges, and the like. Have your studies taken you into that area at all?

MR. BLEVEANS. Well, only informally. I'm aware that—through people who have been in and around the river business all their lives—that the river business generally—now, this we're talking about regulated barge lines now—that is an all-white operation except for, you know, not enough exceptions to talk about.

COMMISSIONER MITCHELL. Have you ever pursued that in any way?

MR. BLEVEANS. No. We are bound as lawyers, you know, not to solicit business. And we have never had a person, for instance, who had an unfortunate experience trying to get a job on the river come to us and say: "What can you do for me?"

MR. POWELL. Has it been your observation that there is a good deal of Federal money coming into this area in the form of subcontracts through local business? When we talk about—

MR. BLEVEANS. I know there are, yes.

COMMISSIONER MITCHELL. I beg your pardon?

MR. BLEVEANS. There are a lot, yes.

COMMISSIONER MITCHELL. There are?

MR. BLEVEANS. Yes.

COMMISSIONER MITCHELL. Do you see evidence of affirmative action programs in effect or would you guess there is general compliance with the requirements of Federal contractors and subcontractors with respect to employment?

MR. BLEVEANS. No, because my experience has been that, as someone pointed out earlier, that this—For some reason, you know, the part of the contract that says "make the product, and this is how you will make it" and all those things, all those contract provisions are very important and everybody knows what they are, but when it gets down to that bit about affirmative action or you won't discriminate against blacks, that seems to be an appendage which nobody seems to care about.

And without the enforcement and without the threat of a contract rescission based on noncompliance with a nondiscrimination clause, who is going to do it? I mean, you know, they don't do it unless they have to.

COMMISSIONER MITCHELL. You would suggest then a fruitful line of investigation for the Commission might be an examination of the frequency with which compliance investigations take place in this area?

MR. BLEVEANS. Yes, and I assume that you'd be met with the same thing you have been met with before—that they don't have the staff. They can't handle it. They can handle other things, but this is something they can't handle.

COMMISSIONER MITCHELL. Yes.

MR. BLEVEANS. And it's very discouraging. I don't mean to make light of it but—

COMMISSIONER MITCHELL. That's not necessarily always the case. But it's discouraging. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER FREEMAN. Mr. Buggs, do you have a question?

MR. BUGGS. No.

COMMISSIONER FREEMAN. Thank you, Mr. Blevens. You may be excused.

Mr. Powell, will you call the next witnesses?

MR. POWELL. Madam Chairman, the next witness is Mr. Fred Wood, a panel of witnesses; he is to be accompanied by Mr. Lewis Thomas and Mrs. Sarah Jane Clark.

Madam Chairman, these witnesses will be questioned by Mr. Michael Smith, Staff Attorney with the Commission.

(Whereupon, Mr. Fred Wood, Mr. Lewis Thomas, and Mrs. Sarah Jane Clark were sworn by Commissioner Freeman and testified as follows:)

**TESTIMONY OF MR. FRED WOOD, JR., CAIRO COORDINATOR FOR THE SHAWNEE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION; MR. LEWIS THOMAS, DIRECTOR, MAINSTREAM PROGRAM; AND MRS. SARAH JANE CLARK, STAFF MEMBER, SHAWNEE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

MR. SMITH. Beginning with Mr. Thomas, will you please state your names, occupations, and addresses for the record?

MR. THOMAS. My name is Lewis Thomas with the Shawnee Development Council. I'm supervisor of a government program funded by the Labor Department known in Cairo as Operation Mainstream.

MRS. CLARK. Sarah Jane Clark. And I'm a Neighborhood Youth Corps project director with the Shawnee Development Council, Karnak, Illinois.

COMMISSIONER FREEMAN. Will you speak into the microphone, please?

MR. WOOD. Fred Wood, Jr., Alexander County coordinator for the Shawnee Development Council, Cairo, Illinois, area.

MR. SMITH. Mr. Wood, will you please describe, very briefly, what the Shawnee Development Corporation is, particularly with regard to its program in Cairo?

MR. WOOD. Okay. Well, first I might explain that it's a five-county operation with a local office here in Cairo as the sponsor agency for several programs that we have in operation, OEO programs and also Department of Labor programs.

We have three Department of Labor programs; two NYC programs, and one Operation Mainstream program operated in Cairo. We also have emergency food and medical programs.

COMMISSIONER FREEMAN. Just a minute, please. We seem to be having difficulty hearing you, Mr. Wood.

MR. WOOD. Sorry.

COMMISSIONER FREEMAN. Can you speak into the microphone?

MR. WOOD. Okay. We have three Department of Labor programs operated in Cairo; two NYC programs, one Mainstream program. We have an outreach referral program. We have an emergency food and medical service program. We also have a youth program that we operate through our office.

MR. SMITH. The Department of Labor programs, those are Mainstream and NYC—Neighborhood Youth Corps? Is that correct?

Mr. WOOD. Right.

Mr. SMITH. Would you please describe these two programs in a little more depth, just a couple of sentences about each one?

Mr. WOOD. Operation Mainstream deals with—The age group criteria is 22 on up, with no education requirements.

The work-training program, I think we have a total of 76 people that are working on the project here in Cairo.

The NYC program, the neighborhood program, Neighborhood Youth Corps program, we have an in-school program that deals with high school students from ages 16, 17 years old.

Mr. SMITH. About how many enrollees are there in that program?

Mr. WOOD. Forty-two.

Mr. SMITH. In Cairo?

Mr. WOOD. Right.

Mr. SMITH. Could you give us an estimate on both the Mainstream program and the NYC program about what percentage of the makeup of that enrollment is black?

Mr. WOOD. Mainstream program I would say would be about 60 to 65 percent black.

Mr. SMITH. Mainstream?

Mr. WOOD. Right. Neighborhood Youth Corps would be about 50-50. 75-25. I'm sorry.

Mr. SMITH. Seventy-five percent black? Is that right?

Mr. WOOD. Right.

Mr. SMITH. Mrs. Clark, does the Neighborhood Youth Corps program make vocational training available to its enrollees?

Mrs. CLARK. We have two Neighborhood Youth Corps programs, one for the high school attending student which provides work experience. We have another program for dropouts called NYC-2. We have 50 enrollees in the five counties served by Shawnee Development Council. The majority of these are enrolled at the Cairo Adult Vocational Training Center. We have about 36 persons from the five-county area who come into Cairo.

We have 12 of our students are back in the regular high school completing their senior year of studies, and we have two students in a beauty school in Marion, Illinois.

Mr. SMITH. Let me ask you this. Do you feel that, by and large, those who are enrolled in programs—Upon graduation from these programs do you feel that they are adequately qualified for their chosen professions or vocations?

Mrs. CLARK. These dropout students come to us at ages 16, 17 years old. We enroll them in what we call a 2-year employability plan which combines education, vocational training, remedial education, whatever is necessary so that within a 2-year period hopefully we will bring them up to an employable level.

Now, when they leave us perhaps to take private employment or go on to further training they are only about 18 years old. The job market for 18-year-old or teenage employment in this area is very

limited. The jobs that are available—The merchants, everyone, can be pretty selective about who they hire because the jobs are so few.

MR. SMITH. Mr. Wood, is your experience also that jobs for young people in this area are inadequate or unavailable?

MR. WOOD. Yes, they are.

MR. SMITH. Let me ask you this. Do you feel that job prospects for young black people in this community are any less adequate than job prospects for white young people?

MR. WOOD. I feel this way. With reference to young people as a whole?

MR. SMITH. Yes.

MR. WOOD. Okay. Young people I feel have a tendency to—Black people here are frustrated, you know, after they finish their high school education, or what have you, for the lack of opportunities, availability of job opportunities here in the area. They move on elsewhere, to larger metropolitan areas, you know, to find some type of employment to make their living.

Another possible cause—Because there are so many people I think from the surrounding areas such as across the river from the larger manufacturing plants here that do not hire, you know, local people—They haven't hired local people until recently, you know. Kentucky and Missouri people were taking a lot of jobs away from the younger people.

MR. SMITH. So you are saying that the employment by local employers, mainly larger employers, of out-of-State residents puts greater pressure on this community?

MR. WOOD. Right.

MR. SMITH. Mr. Thomas, you stated that you are the administrator of the local Mainstream program in Cairo?

MR. THOMAS. That's supervisor, sir.

MR. SMITH. Supervisor?

MR. THOMAS. Yes, sir.

MR. SMITH. What has been your experience in attempting to place black Mainstream enrollees with local government agencies?

MR. THOMAS. I haven't been able to do so, sir. I have tried. For instance, I can give you—We had a lady on our program which was a white lady, and at the time the city officials, some of them resigned, retired because of age—Well, I had a lady who was still working on the program. When the program broke up, well, I told her she had to go. I mean this was the last day of the program. But the city held her on until my program broke up. Instead of them hiring this lady what I had over there, the white lady, they hired two more people.

Now, when my program broke up I had to let this lady go. They wanted her back. I told her that I wasn't going to let her go back because they could have hired her if they wanted her.

So they said they wanted a secretary. I told them I'd bring them one. Well, they had a meeting at city council, and I went there that evening about 3 o'clock and I went in with a black woman. And they didn't want her. They didn't want no secretary at that time.

MR. SMITH. They had asked you for a secretary?

MR. THOMAS. They had asked me for one, but when I stepped in with the black lady they didn't want none at that time.

MR. SMITH. They changed their mind?

MR. THOMAS. Yes.

MR. SMITH. Can you think of other examples of similar situations?

MR. THOMAS. Yes, sir. Before this new Commission got in at the jail house, this other fellow who was the maintenance man resigned. He was a black man. So I had one working there and I asked them about giving the job—Our contract reads that wherever we hire someone and they get a sufficient amount of training, after a certain length of time if a job should come open our people will have first priority.

Well, when this fellow resigned I had a young man there who could take over the job but instead of giving it to the black man they reached out and got a white man for the job, and I never knowed them to have a white jailer in this town since I been here.

MR. SMITH. Even though the black man was qualified for the job?

MR. THOMAS. He had been there 6 months and he had did the job once before. But they hired a white man.

MR. SMITH. What happened to the black man who was in that position?

MR. THOMAS. Well, one day I happened to be coming to my office. My office was upstairs over the jail house at that time. And one day I was coming to work to my office and they was standing around. I asked the jailer what they going to do about my man. He said: "We don't need him because we going to use the prisoners."

Well, the State man came down and looked over the jail and they couldn't arrest nobody—At least they could arrest and couldn't hold them. So the jail got in bad shape. And they wanted two more of my men. And naturally I had to bring it up before my director. And I explained the case to him. And so far they haven't got anyone.

MR. SMITH. I see. Are there any other city or county agencies with whom you have tried to place black employees?

MR. THOMAS. Yes, I have. I have tried to place a black lady with the public utility company. I told them what we would do, that we would hire and then pay her while she was training. After a certain length of training the city would take them over.

So the chairman of the board told me that he would have to bring it up in the meeting. I asked him when was the meeting. This was sometime back in November. And I told him I would make the meeting myself.

But that night somehow or another the meeting was cancelled. But I did go see the manager of the utility plant and I asked him had the chairman of the board talked with him? He said yes.

So then I said: "Did he ask you anything about me putting a young lady in the place for training?"

And he said: "What you do is send me some people down here to take a test."

Well, I did. I sent him about three or four blacks down there to take a test. And I haven't heard any more since. And that's been 3 or 4 or 5 months ago.

MR. SMITH. Then is it your opinion that these experiences were due to a hesitance on the part of these officials to hire people because of their race?

MR. THOMAS. Yes, sir. They dragging their feet. They could do a little better than what they doing.

MR. SMITH. Thank you. Mrs. Clark, in the fall of 1970, did you as a Shawnee staff member aid the mayor's office in the preparation of a statement on the needs of the community of Cairo in response to a request by the Federal Regional Council?

MRS. CLARK. I did.

MR. SMITH. Why was your office called upon to aid in this manner?

MRS. CLARK. The city administration in the city of Cairo operates with four Commissioners and one mayor. These are persons who make their living elsewhere. They have full-time employment and they are kind of part-time administrators of our city. They are low-salaried. I believe it's about \$100 a month for commissioners and \$125 a month for the mayor.

They do not have a sufficient staff. They have a city clerk. The mayor has no secretary. He has no official office. They have no photocopy machines. They have no library of the latest periodicals to keep up with what is going on in the world. And so we have an administration that has received a lot of public attention nationally, statewide, locally, and they have no machinery with which to combat this problem.

As I understand it, the corporation councilmen and the mayor of the city of Cairo were invited to Chicago to meet with the interagency regional task force about December of 1969. At that time they were pretty embarrassed that they couldn't present any kind of a comprehensive plan or exactly what they thought could be used in the city of Cairo.

When they returned, just by word of mouth and general consensus, they turned to the Shawnee Development Council, which is a community action agency serving this area, for some technical assistance in drawing up a plan.

We then worked with Dr. Laughnum from S.I.U. Economics Department and put together a paper presented—for this mayor to present to the interagency council in Chicago.

Basically, this social, economic rehabilitation plan stated that most of the community needs in Cairo were focused, were pivoting on poverty. So they offered a plan of an economic development corporation to be owned by the people and start with simple machine parts and go into manufacturing, that there would be a manpower grant to complement this effort, this enterprise, that they would coordinate all the training programs that were available from Labor, work for an industrial park. There was to be social rehabilitation.



And in here in great detail there was quite a lot of mention about redecoration and revitalizing the current housing facilities that were here, that they needed updating. They were behind the times.

So this plan was submitted to the interagency regional task force in early spring of 1970, and I think there was no contact made from—According to the mayor, he received no word back from that interagency council—

MR. SMITH. Let me ask you this.

MRS. CLARK (continuing). In relation to this.

MR. SMITH. Subsequent to the submission of that plan, you were also involved in the preparation of a proposal for a public service careers program, were you not?

MRS. CLARK. Right.

MR. SMITH. You and the mayor's staff and the corporation counsel also worked on this proposal, did you not?

MRS. CLARK. Right.

MR. SMITH. Was the city council involved in the preparation of this proposal or consulted on it?

MRS. CLARK. Right. Now, this proposal was written and submitted to Chicago in its entirety prior to the election when the administration of the council in this town changed. However, after that council was seated we held two meetings with the new city council, going over—not detailed enough—but a general consensus of what the program was to consist of.

And we got very favorable response from the city council at that time as far as accepting it.

MR. SMITH. Had there been consultation with members of the black community?

MRS. CLARK. There had not been consultation with the United Front or those members of the black community. Our staff people in our offices were well aware the city had submitted a Labor program for public service training and it wasn't a huge program. It involved a projected 25 openings over the next 21-month period and a variety of jobs and 10 upgrade jobs within the city administration. It was not a large program but it was to have been a start towards—

MR. SMITH. To be funded at about \$137,000?

MRS. CLARK. Right.

MR. SMITH. Over what period of time was that again?

MRS. CLARK. Twenty-one months.

MR. SMITH. Twenty-one months.

MRS. CLARK. Right.

MR. SMITH. Would it provide approximately 25 jobs?

MRS. CLARK. These would be 25 entry level jobs. Now, of these jobs there were to be five new positions created over this 21-month period. There were 14 of these positions to be reserved turnover—in other words, where people would quit. And six which were currently vacant in the present budget.

MR. SMITH. After the submission of this plan did the Department of Labor decide to fund the program?

MRS. CLARK. The plan was submitted in January of 1971, and because of needing additional material, extension was given to the deadline until February of 1971.

I think the Labor Department was about ready to fund it at that time, and they realized that the mayor was up for reelection and they tended to wait until after the election to see if the people who wrote the program would still be in office whenever it was to be funded.

There was no action on it from February until June, and the program was approved then in late June.

MR. SMITH. It was approved?

MRS. CLARK. Of 1971, yes.

MR. SMITH. Okay. Subsequent to the approval, is it not true that the city council determined to table the plan?

MRS. CLARK. No, this was after—

MR. SMITH. I'm sorry. Yes. After the approval by the Department of Labor.

MRS. CLARK. Right.

MR. SMITH. Would you please explain to us what happened between the time of the announcement of the decision by the Department of Labor and that decision by the city council which led to that decision?

MRS. CLARK. We had been given previous knowledge on telephone conversations that the program was to be approved, was being signed in Chicago. And then the Labor people contacted the mayor and said that representatives of the United Front had appeared at the Labor Department in Chicago, that they didn't feel like they knew about this program, they had not been consulted enough about the program, and they wanted to find out more about it.

I think the Labor Department furnished them with some information about it but suggested to the mayor that it would be wise to have a public meeting announced in the paper whereby persons in the community could come and discuss this public service careers program.

This was done, and advertisements placed in the paper. Then on the Sunday night before the public meeting was to be held on Wednesday, Reverend Koen I believe—I did not hear the broadcast—but had a broadcast from Chicago, and in the course of discussing the new program to come to Cairo said that there were to be 50 jobs in the city—and that they wanted to see that the black community received their fair share of the 50 jobs.

Well, of course, there were not 50 jobs in any way.

But concerned citizens from the community heard this broadcast, which just about everybody in Cairo listens to on Sunday night, and they couldn't see how a city that couldn't pay overtime to its policemen and its firemen and could not meet expenses of garbage collection and things were going to hire 50 new people.

So at the public meeting that following Wednesday night we had two groups of dissenters, and as a result, with a lot of back-and-forth discussion about the PSC program—do you know what is in it or what does it involve?—and it was a shambles.

The council being just seated in office a matter of 2 to 3 months said: "The whole community is against this thing. We just vote not to have it."

MR. SMITH. Then it seems to me that you are saying that the program was ultimately rejected because of a misunderstanding in the community that resulted at least in part from the racial polarization in this community?

MRS. CLARK. There was a triple misunderstanding I think all along the way, all within the course of a week, because the city council had stated to me prior to the funding of the program that there were positions in there for firemen, policemen, typists, city clerks in the city hall, that if qualified black persons could be found, particularly for the civil service openings—but they definitely intended to have black persons in this administration. And this was the new city council.

So I don't think it was a question of racism or racial bias on the part of the council as much as it was this aura that two groups have that have done verbal battle many times.

And that evening it was pretty hot, and there were quite a few sirens running up and down the street to make everybody a little nervous, and the council simply voted no.

MR. SMITH. Thank you.

Mr. Wood, you have been active with local youth activities, have you not? And have you not been responsible for the organization of a local band?

MR. WOOD. Yes.

MR. SMITH. Will you describe for us the adequacy of recreational and social facilities that exist in this community for young people?

MR. WOOD. They are almost nil. Recreational activities for the youth in particular are very limited. There's no public building that has been really made available for youth or for the community really on a broad base. We have to go through the school system, and they have only really been lenient on this particular point within the last 2 or 3 months.

Swimming facilities. The swimming pool here in Cairo has been closed since 1962 or 1963.

MR. SMITH. It was closed to avoid integration, was it not?

MR. WOOD. Well, the pool had been integrated on a temporary—on a short basis. But after so much riot there had been a transition between ownership between the city and private organization and subsequently was closed. And since that time numerous youth of the surrounding community have drowned because of swimming in the rivers and so forth.

I think the kids of Cairo now have to travel 25, 30, 40 miles just to have decent swimming facilities. They have to go out of State to swim.

MR. SMITH. Do you feel that local officials have been sensitive to these problems and that they have been helpful in solving them?