

PREPARED REMARKS OF  
PATRICIA M. WORTHY, CHAIRMAN  
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
FOR  
CARI CONFERENCE' 89  
GINESEE PLAZA HOLIDAY INN  
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK  
NOVEMBER 4, 1989, 7:30 AM TO 8:45 AM  
"KEEPING IN TOUCH"

I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK WITH YOU THIS MORNING. THOUGH A NEW YORKER, I HAVE NEVER HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT ROCHESTER BEFORE, SO THIS TRIP GIVES ME A DOUBLE TREAT. I GET THE CHANCE TO COME HOME AND I GET THE CHANCE TO MEET NEW FRIENDS. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT WE VALUE NEW FRIENDSHIPS BECAUSE WE MUST ALWAYS BE IN THE BUSINESS OF KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH ONE ANOTHER.

WHEN I ACCEPTED THE INVITATION TO BE WITH YOU, I BEGAN THINKING ABOUT CORPORATE AMERICA AND ABOUT BLACK FOLK IN PARTICULAR AND WHAT THAT REALLY MEANS AND A STORY CAME TO MIND.

AS THE STORY GOES, THERE WERE THESE TWO FRIENDS THAT WHILE ON A CAMPING TRIP THEY DISTURBED A VICIOUS BEAR. THE BEAR CHASED THESE MEN WITH EVIL IN HIS HEART AND THE MEN COULD NOT SEEM TO ESCAPE. HOWEVER, DURING A LULL IN THE CHASE, ONE OF THE FRIENDS STARTED PUTTING ON A PAIR OF TENNIS SHOES THAT HE TOOK FROM HIS BACK PACK. THE OTHER FRIEND LOOKED AT HIS FRIEND AND SMIRKED AS HE ASKED, "DO YOU REALLY THINK THOSE SHOES WILL HELP YOU TO OUT RUN THAT BEAR?" THE MAN FINISHED TYING HIS TENNIS SHOES AND SAID "NO, ALL I'VE GOT TO DO IS OUT RUN YOU."

I IMAGINE THAT YOU MEN AND WOMEN AT XEROX HAVE TO SURVIVE AND PLAN FOR SURVIVAL LIKE EVERYONE ELSE, BUT BLACK PEOPLE CANNOT AFFORD STRATEGIES THAT DO NOT SUPPORT EACH OTHER. WE CANNOT SACRAFICE ONE ANOTHER - NOR CAN WE FORGET ONE ANOTHER WHEN THINGS ARE GOOD OR

WHEN THINGS ARE BAD. WHEN THINGS ARE GOOD WE MUST REACH OUT - WE MUST EMBRACE -AND WE MUST MAKE PERMENANT. WHEN THINGS ARE BAD, WE MUST BE ABLE TO RELY ON THE STRENGTH OF THE STRONG AMOUNG US...  
WE MUST KEEP IN TOUCH.

I AM NOT A PREACHER,. NONETHELESS, LET ME PREACH A LITTLE THIS MORNING. I WANT TO REMIND YOU THAT BEING BLACK IN CORPORATE AMERICA IS DIFFERENT. BEING BLACK IN CORPORATE AMERICA IS NOT JUST TO WEAR THE SAME DRESS SUITS AND HAVE THE SAME MANNER OF SPEECH AS YOUR WHITE COUNTERPARTS, IT IS NOT JUST HAVING THE SAME AMBITIONS AND THE SAME EDUCATION AS YOUR WHITE COUNTERPARTS BUT HAVING A DIFFERENT COLOR SKIN. AND THAT DIFFERENCE IS THE DIFFERENCE OF A WHOLE HERITAGE THAT SETS US APART EVEN IF WE WEAR THE SAME SUITS AND YOU CAN NO LONGER RECOGNIZE WHO WE ARE OVER THE TELEPHONE. SOME SAY THAT BLACK PEOPLE ARE NATRUAL ATHLETES -- THAT WE ARE BORN WITH MUSICAL RHYTHM THAT WE ARE MORE SENSUAL. THIS MAY BE TRUE. BUT I TELL YOU TODAY, THAT OUR HISTORY,... THE PLIGHT OF BLACK PEOPLE IN AMERICA HAS MADE US DIFFERENT IN MANY SUBTLE WAYS. I BELIEVE THAT SOMETIMES THESE DIFFERENCES CAN BRING US INTO DIRECT CONFLICT WITH EXPECTED CORPORATE BEHAVIOR. I THINK THAT WE ARE AN HONEST PEOPLE WHO ARE UNCOMFORTABLE WHEN WE DO THINGS THAT CONFLICT WITH THE HISTORY OF OUR MORAL EXPERIENCE. OUR HISTORY HAS TAUGHT US THE PAIN OF BEING TAKEN FOR A RIDE - OF NOT GETTING A DOLLARS WORTH FOR A DOLLAR SPENT. THIS EXPERIENCE IS WHAT YOU WILL FIND UNDERNEATH THAT DIFFERENT COLOR SKIN IN BLACK CORPORATE AMERICA AND

THIS DIFFERENCE LENDS SOMETHING POSITIVE TO THE CORPORATE LIFE.

IT IS NOT ONLY YOUR EDUCATION AND YOUR COMMITMENT THAT YOU BRING TO THE CORPORATE WORLD, BUT YOUR POTENTIAL. - A POTENTIAL FULL OF ABILITY AND THE DESIRE TO CONTRIBUTE GREATLY, BUT WHAT I AM ALSO SAYING TO YOU TODAY, IS THAT THIS POTENTIAL ALSO INCLUDES A SENSITIVITY, AND A COMPASSIONATE THAT MUST BE EMBRACED BY THE CORPORATE CULTURE.

LET ME RELATE TO YOU AN EXPERIENCE THAT I HAD WHEN I ATTENDED A WEEK-LONG FINANCE SEMINAR GIVEN BY THE IRVING TRUST BANK IN NEW YORK A FEW YEARS BACK. I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT THE QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF INFORMATION PRESENTED WAS SUPERIOR, BUT FOR MUCH OF THE SESSION I WAS GREATLY DISTRACTED. DURING ONE OF THE TALKS, THE PRESENTER LOOKED AT ME AND NOTICING MY DISTRESS, ASKED ME WHAT WAS THE MATTER. WELL, THE FIRST THING I POINTED OUT WAS THAT THERE WERE NO WINDOWS IN THIS CORPORATE BOARD ROOM WITH ITS CHANDLIERS AND INTRICATELY CARVED WOOD MOLDINGS. HE EXPLAINED TO ME, THE OUTSIDER, THAT THEY WANTED TO AVOID ANY DISTRACTIONS DURING BOARD MEETINGS, AND THEREFORE, THE LACK OF WINDOWS. I RESPONDED THAT LACK OF DISTRACTION WAS NOT THE IMPORTANT THING.... THE MOST IMPORTANT THING WAS THAT THE LACK OF WINDOWS PREVENTED BOARD MEMBERS FROM SEEING OUT INTO THE WORLD. MOREOVER, THERE WERE TWO WOMEN OF THE SOME TWENTY-ODD PARTICIPANTS.... HOWEVER, THERE WERE NO FACILITIES FOR WOMEN ON THE EXECUTIVE FLOOR. WHEN ONE OF THE WOMEN WENT TO THE BATHROOM THEY HAD TO CLEAR THE "EXECUTIVE WASHROOM" AND

STAND GUARD.

I POINT THIS OUT IN ADDITION TO THE FACT THAT THERE WERE NO BLACK PEOPLE AT ALL TO BE SEEN. I AM SURE THAT EVERYONE HERE WILL AGREE THAT BLACK PEOPLE WOULD NOT HAVE NEEDED TO BE REMINDED THAT ANY CORPORATE DECISIONS MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE HUMAN ELEMENT - THE WELFARE OF THE WORLD, NOR WOULD WE HAVE NEEDED TO BE PRODDED TO UNDERSTAND THAT WOMEN ARE A VERY IMPORTANT PART OF ALL ASPECTS OF THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY.

I MUST ADD HOWEVER, THAT I JUST CAME BACK FROM SPENDING ANOTHER WEEK ON WALL STREET, THIS TIME WITH A LARGE BROKERAGE FIRM AND THERE HAS BEEN SOME IMPROVEMENT IN THE NINE YEARS SINCE MY FIRST TRIP- BUT JUST BARELY. THERE ARE NOW POWDER ROOMS - BUT STILL NO BLACKS AND STILL NO WINDOWS. I BELIEVE THAT OUR BLACK EXPERIENCE HAS MADE US SENSITIVE TO THE THINGS THAT TEND TO MAKE THE WORLD BETTER FOR ALL OF US, THEREFORE WE MUST KEEP IN TOUCH.

DO YOU REMEMBER THE DIFFERENT MEETINGS OF CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER NEIGHBORHOOD GROUPS WE WOULD HOLD IN OUR COMMUNITY, AND OF HOW THEY WOULD ALWAYS BE OPENED WITH A PRAYER. WHILE WE AS BLACKS MAY FEEL A TWINGE OF SOMETHING IF A BOARD MEETING WERE OPENED WITH A PRAYER TODAY, IT WOULD NOT BE COMPLETELY FOREIGN TO US. NONETHELESS, I JUST CANNOT SEE, TWINGE OR NO TWINGE, A BOARD MEETING IN CORPORATE AMERICA OPENING WITH A PRAYER. NOW MAYBE THAT IS NOT SO BAD AND MAYBE I EXAGGERATE. BUT THE POINT IS THAT THE POTENTIAL THAT BLACK AMERICANS BRING TO CORPORATE AMERICA CARRIES

WITH IT AN EXPERIENCE THAT TAKES FOR GRANTED COMPASSION AND A DEEP REGARD FOR FAIR PLAY. SOME MAY TAKE ISSUE, BUT I BELIEVE THAT AS THE EXECUTIVE OFFICES AROUND CORPORATE AMERICA BECOME COLORIZED, AMERICA WILL BECOME MORE CULTURED, MORE SENSITIVE, MORE HUMAN, AND THUS, MORE PROSPEROUS. BEING A PART OF BLACK CORPORATE AMERICA IS SO MUCH MORE THAN BEING THE SAME WITH ONLY DIFFERENT COLORED SKIN.

IT MEANS THAT WE CARRY WITH US THE OBLIGATION TO INSURE THAT OUR COMPANIES CONTINUE TO RECRUIT MORE MINORITIES.

IT MEANS THAT THOSE OF YOU THAT ARE IN CORPORATE AMERICA MUST ACT AS MENTORS TO THOSE ENTERING.

IT MEANS THAT YOU NETWORK- YOU NETWORK -AND THEN YOU NETWORK SOME MORE SO THAT CAPABILITIES AND SOLUTIONS ARE BUT A PHONE CALL AWAY. IT MEANS THAT WE SWELL INTO THE COMMUNITIES WHERE WE LIVE AND THAT WE KEEP HOPES HIGH AND EXAMPLES VISIBLE. IT MEANS WE KEEP IN TOUCH.

THE JOB IS HARDER FOR YOU TODAY BECAUSE THERE ARE FEWER OF YOU IN THE EXPANDING WORK FORCE. FROM 1985 TO 1988 THE NUMBER OF BLACK MALE MANAGERS GREW FROM 2.9% TO 2.9%. THAT IS CORRECT, IT DID NOT GROW AT ALL. NEITHER DID THE PERCENTAGE OF BLACK MALE PROFESSIONALS GROW DURING THIS PERIOD. THAT FIGURE REMAINED AT 1.9%. THERE IS ANOTHER INTERESTING FIGURE THAT I GOT FROM THE EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION, AND THAT IS THAT THE TOTAL PERCENTAGE OF BLACK CLERICAL EMPLOYEES HAS DROPPED FROM 20.6% TO 13.7% BETWEEN

1985 AND 1988. THE NUMBERS FOR BLACK WOMEN MANAGERS ARE EVEN MORE PROBLEMMATIC. MY EXPERIENCE HAS BEEN PRIMARILY IN GOVERNMENT AND I DARE SAY THAT LIFE THERE IS NOT SO VERY DIFFERENT - EXCEPT THAT WE WORK MUCH HARDED THAN THE RUMERS WOULD SUGGEST.

LET ME DIGRESS FOR A MOMENT AND TELL YOU A LITTLE ABOUT MY JOB. FIRST OF ALL, THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION IS NOT AN ADVERTISEMENT FOR FREE TELEVISION SPACE OR AN ORGANIZATION OF PUBLIC SERVICE VOLUNTEERS. SOMETIMES PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT FAMILIAR WITH STATE REGULATORY BODIES ARE MISLED BY OUR NAMES. NONETHELESS, STATE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONS OR PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSIONS AS THEY ARE ALSO CALLED, HAVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR REGULATING THE VARIOUS UTILITIES SUCH AS GAS, ELECTRIC AND TELEPHONES WITHIN A STATE. IN SOME JURISDICTIONS WATER, RAILROADS, TRANSPORTATION AND SECURITIES ARE ALSO REGULATED.

IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, OUR COMMISSION REGULATES THE TELEPHONE, ELECTRIC, AND GAS COMPANIES AND SECURITIES BROKERS. THESE ARE ALL MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR CORPORATIONS WHICH EMPLOY THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE. PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONS ACT AS SUBSTITUTES FOR COMPETITION FOR THESE NATURAL MONOPOLIES BY SETTING UTILITY RATES. AND, IN DOING SO, WE IMPACT, THROUGH THE APPROVAL PROCESS, THEIR CAPITAL STRUCTURES, COSTS AND PROFIT MARGINS. ADDITIONALLY, THROUGH THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGULATORY UTILITY COMMISSIONERS, COMMISSIONS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY TAKE A VERY PRO- ACTIVE POSTURE IN INFLUENCING NATIONAL POLICY IN AREAS OF

ENERGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS.

MY EXPERIENCE OF THE PAST NINE YEARS HAS PROVIDED ME A UNIQUE LOOK AT CORPORATE AMERICA, WHERE THERE IS LITTLE PROGRESS. I DO NOT SEE THE NUMBER OF BLACK FACES INCREASING FAST ENOUGH IN CORPORATE GATHERINGS, IN FINANCIAL MEETINGS ON WALL STREET, IN BUSINESS SEMINARS OR IN BOARD ROOMS. XEROX, HOWEVER, IS TO BE CONGRATULATED FOR ITS RECORD IN MINORITY HIRING AND PROMOTION. I UNDERSTAND FROM A RECENT NEWSPAPER REPORT THAT ABOUT 14% OF XEROX'S EMPLOYEES ARE BLACK AND THAT 12% OF ITS MANAGERS ARE BLACK. XEROX ALSO HAS 12 BLACK VICE PRESIDENTS AND ONE BLACK PRESIDENT OF AN OPERATING DIVISION. YOUR UPCOMING AWARD FROM THE EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL IS WELL DESERVED. CONGRATULATIONS.

BUT AS WE REFLECT ON THIS ACHIEVEMENT, REFLECT TOO ON THE PROBLEMS WE FACE IN ACHIEVING CONTINUED PROGRESS WHEN BLACKS WHO MAKE UP 12.3% OF THE NATION'S POPULATION ONLY COMPRISE 3% OF THE ENROLLMENT AT THE LEADING BUSINESS SCHOOLS.

ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS YOURS, MUST WORK TO INCREASE SUCH NUMBERS. DON'T ONLY DO THIS THROUGH RECRUITMENT TRIPS FOR YOUR COMPANIES. DO THIS ALSO THROUGH TRIPS AND CAREER SEMINARS ORGANIZED AS EVENTS SPONSORED BY THE BLACK CORPORATE LEADERSHIP REGIONALLY OR NATIONALLY. IT IS VITAL THAT WE KEEP IN TOUCH.

WE NO LONGER HAVE A MOMENTUM WHICH KEEPS THE COUNTRY'S ATTENTION AND PRIORITY ON THE WELFARE OF BLACK AMERICA. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION HAS BEEN SYSTEMATICALLY MADE LESS OF A PRIORITY



IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND THEREFORE IN THE BOARD ROOMS OF AMERICAN BUSINESS. WE ALL KNOW THAT LITANY OF EVENTS. AS REPORTED BY BLACK ENTERPRISE MAGAZINE, A CONFERENCE BOARD SURVEY OF BUSINESS OPIONION LEADERS RANKED AFFIRMATIVE ACTION FOR MINORITES AND WOMEN AS THEIR 23RD OUT OF 25 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ISSUES. WE MUST KEEP IN TOUCH.

TODAY WE HAVE THE BURDEN OF DRUG ABUSE; WE HAVE THE REALITY OF TEENAGE PARENTS; AND TODAY WE MUST CONTINUE THE STRUGGLE WITHOUT THE LEADERSHIP OF PEOPLE SUCH AS MARTIN LUTHER KING. WE HAVE A NATION THAT IS SLIPPING IN WORLD LEADERSHIP ECONOMICALLY; WE HAVE A NATION THAT BY ALL RIGHTS SHOULD BE NUMBER ONE IN EDUCATION WORLDWIDE, BUT INSTEAD IS NUMBER 16. WE MUST KEEP IN TOUCH.

TODAY WE NEED ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS YOURS TO ORGANIZE SUMMER EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS FOR BLACK YOUTH AT YOUR COMPANY WHERE YOUR MEMBERS PROVIDE THE SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE IN THE WORK PLACE AND THE INCENTIVE FOR EXCELLENCE.

TODAY, WE NEED ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS YOURS TO ORGANIZE WITH- IN THEIR COMPANIES, COLLEGE INTERN PROGRAMS, - THAT TRANSLATE INTO FULL TIME EMPLOYMENT AFTER GRADUATION.

I DO NOT NEED TO TELL YOU HOW IMPORTANT IT WOULD BE IF SOME OF THE MEN AT YOUR COMPANY ORGANIZE A PROGRAM OF REGULAR VISITS TO AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WHERE YOU SIT DOWN WITH THE YOUNG MEN IN THE CLASS AND HELP THEM TO LEARN TO READ AND SOLVE MATHETICAL PROBLEMS. YOU REALIZE THE GREAT IMPACT THIS WOULD HAVE ON THEIR HORIZONS AND

ON THE PROSPECTS FOR CHANGING AND INFLUENCING THEIR VALVES.

TODAY, WE NEED THE MEMBERS OF YOUR ORGANIZATION TO PROMOTE AND SPONSOR JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT TYPE PROGRAMS IN THE LESS ADVANTAGE AREAS OF THE CITY WHERE BUSINESS ACUMEN IS DEVELOPED THROUGH PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE. THIS, TOO, WILL RAISE HORIZONS AND IDENTIFY FOR SOME A WHOLE NEW WORLD OF OPPORTUNITIES.

WE CANNOT SEPARATE OURSELVES FROM THE PROBLEMS OF OUR COUNTRY AS WE FOCUS ON THE PROBLEMS OF OUR RACIAL MINORITY. WE MUST CONCERN OURSELVES WITH ALL PROBLEMS AS WE CONTINUE TO ADDRESS THOSE OF THE BLACK COMMUNITY SPECIFICALLY. AND IN DOING SO WE WILL PROVIDE LEADERSHIP GENERALLY.

IN THE 1960'S WE WERE ON A ROAD WHICH WAS MOVING IN THE PROPER DIRECTION-- TODAY THAT DIRECTION MUST BE REDEFINED. YESTERDAY WE FOCUSED IMMEDIATELY ON THE PROBLEMS OF EVERYTHING THAT WAS UNEQUAL--THE SCHOOLS--THE LUNCH COUNTERS-- THE BUSES. TODAY WE FIRST WILL HAVE TO FOCUS ON OURSELVES. THERE WAS A TIME WHEN WE, AS A PEOPLE, HAD LEADERSHIP, COMMITMENT AND A COMMON GOAL. THAT, UNFORTUNATELY, HAS CHANGED. WE MUST FIGURE OUT A STRATEGY THAT NEGATES ARE PRESENT PLIGHT. AS WE EVALUATE OUR NEIGHBORHOODS WE FIND THAT THE GOAL OF THE 1960'S OF OWNING OUR OWN BUSINESSES HAS NOT YET BEEN REALIZED IN 1990. OUR GOAL, THE GOAL OF ORGANIZATIONS LIKE YOURS AND OTHERS HAS GOT TO BE TO INCREASE OUR PARTICIPATION SIGNIFICANTLY IN AMERICA'S PRIVATE AND CORPORATE BUSINESS.

IN THE 1970'S WE CAME TOGETHER AND SET POLITICAL ACTION AS OUR OBJECTIVE. TODAY WE HAVE SEEN A BLACK MAN RUN A GOOD RACE FOR HIS PARTY'S NOMINATION OF PRESIDENT. TOMORROW, HAVING A BLACK MAYOR OF NEW YORK AND A BLACK GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA ARE MORE THAN A POSSIBILITY.

WHAT I AM EMPHASIZING IS THAT OUR COMMUNITY IS CAPABLE OF GREAT SUCCESS-- IS CAPABLE OF GREAT DEDICATION TO CAUSE AND ACHIEVEMENT.

I SAY TO YOU WHO ARE IN THE FOREFRONT OF OUR EFFORTS IN CORPORATE AMERICA-- I SAY TO YOU WHO ARE EXPERIENCED IN THE AREAS OF BUSINESS AND FINANCE-- I SAY TO YOU WHO HAVE THE EDUCATION AND THE KNOW-HOW THAT THE TIME IS NOW FOR US TO ESTABLISH NEW GOALS AND A TIMETABLE TO INSERT OURSELVES VIGOROUSLY INTO THE STRUCTURE OF CORPORATE AMERICA. BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY, IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE KEEP IN TOUCH.

THANK YOU.

