

REQUESTS, SUGGESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

To: Starkville Board of Aldermen

From: Starkville Caucus of the Oktibbeha County Branch
of The National Association for the Advancement
of Colored People (N.A.A.C.P.)

7-17-73

I. Employment

- A. All departments of the city should have Black employees in proportion to the percentage in the population. (35-40% now) These employees should be at all levels and not concentrated at the lowest paying levels and jobs.
- B. There should be more Black policemen. At present, there are only two doing actual police work and one doing meter maid work. Consideration should be given to adding Black and White women to the force to work with meters and school traffic relieving policemen for other duties.
- C. Black firemen should be recruited and hired.
- D. At City Hall the office staff is all White except for a Black janitor. Black personnel should be hired as assistant clerks, file clerks and/or bookkeepers. This will improve the city's image as relates to Black folk.
- E. At least one department of the city—Electric, Water, Building, Recreation, Streets—should be headed by a Black person. There should be substantial upgrading of Black personnel in all departments.
- F. There is a marked need for upgrading in the street department. It is very objectionable to see a Black street employee working for the city for 15 years walking behind a garbage truck when the White driver or foreman just started working with the city a week ago. Such situations do exist in that department.

II. Housing

- A. The Starkville Housing Authority should have at least two Black people on its board.
- B. It is the duty of the City to see that there are no segregated subdivisions, no segregated public housing in the city. The City Board of Aldermen should discourage implied, verbal or unwritten restrictive covenants and grant people of all races and colors the right to buy and live wherever they so desire.
- C. Black people are being concentrated and contained too much in Northwest Starkville. Public housing and rent supplement housing should be dispersed throughout the city. Compacted housing and crowding together of low-income families can produce our slum of tomorrow.
- D. Future urban renewal areas or clearance of blighted areas in the city should not be forced in a dictatorial manner on the people involved. In blighted areas, committees of affected residents should be formed and should participate freely and fully in all plans, programs and suggested improvements of blighted areas.
- E. The city's zoning ordinances and fire safety regulations should apply to all housing in the city including low-income housing.
- F. The city should consider an ordinance that would permit the cleaning up of vacant and abandoned lots in the city and charging cleaning fees to the estate.

III. Recreation

- A. Recreational facilities at Westside Park and Pool are woefully inadequate. With continued building of houses in this area there is an immediate need for improvements.
- B. There should be a reorganization of the recreation department with delegation of authority clearly spelled out. This reorganization should include the full time employment of one Black person.
- C. Improvements needed at Westside Pool—concrete sidewalks, tiling of ditches.
- D. The Board should consider the establishment of miniparks with play areas for small children in all sections of the city.

IV. Education

- A. The Black member of the school board appointed by The Board of Alderman should be carefully considered and should be recommended and approved by the Black Community. This can best be done by polling the membership of the larger Black organizations in the city—The N.A.A.C.P., American Legion Post 240; The Starkville Teachers Association, Literary Art and Green Thumbs Garden Clubs, and The Black Caucus
- B. No public funds should support in any manner private segregated academies.

V. Voting, Registration, Election

- A. Blacks should be appointed to the city election commission. Election day officials should be racially balanced according to the Black-White population in each ward.
- B. The Board should seriously consider combining city and county voter registration so that new registrants can register at one place at one time.
- C. Election officials should be courteous to all people at all times.
- D. Many Black voters must walk long distances to vote in elections. Voting places should be selected in the areas where the voters live so as not to place an undue hardship on voters without transportation.
- E. Without large elections in the city, the voting power of Black voters is diluted. The board is requested to discontinue at large elections except for one alderman, and permit the voters of each ward to select their own alderman.

VI. A. Principles of human decency should apply in city courts and jails. Persons charged with offenses should be given fair trials and appropriate sentences.

- B. There should be no beating of prisoners in jail.
- C. Work details for city prisoners should be done in the city with no transfers to county farms in other counties.
- D. Murder, attacks with guns or knives are serious offenses and should be considered as such. There should be no racial discrimination in the meting of justice

VI. City Boards and Commissions

- A. There should be Black members of all boards and commissions of the city. These Black members should be recommended and approved by the major Black organizations in this city. Yes-men and yes-women (Uncle Toms and Aunt Marys) should not be selected to represent Black people.

VII. City Services

- A. Streets in most Black neighborhoods are too narrow, without curbs and gutters are improperly lighted and have inadequate fire hydrants.
- B. Garbage pick up's in many Black neighborhoods are too infrequent.
- C. Street sweeping and cleaning should be done in Black owned business areas as well as on Main street.
- D. Long Street from Highway 82 to Westside Park is a dangerous street—too narrow and with deep curves and no side walks. The street should be widened with sidewalks added or made a one way street

VIII. Revenue Sharing Monies

- A. Some of the city's revenue sharing monies should be spent on social services--aid to the poor, blind-crippled, social work among disadvantaged people—medical care for selected cases of borderline poor people.