

Judas sold out Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. Some of our locally elected Black officials may sell-out their constituents for a much higher price. Still the same, they have a price and construction unions have made a science of finding out just what that price may be. How can a sector of a major industry be so racist and discriminatory but yet have the congeniality, loyalty and cooperation of elected officials who owe their offices to Black folks? Black folks who construction unions have so rigidly blocked from employment opportunities and Black businesses which construction unions will seek to kill on sight. Let's look at this gigantic contradiction.

President Lyndon B. Johnson established workforce affirmative action with Executive Order 11246 in 1965 as an enforcement tool to the recently signed Civil Rights Act. The US Department of Labor has the responsibility of monitoring and enforcing this law. It requires employers to send in detailed employment reports on the ethnicity and gender of people on their current payroll lists. It also tallies the hours worked by these employees. From these reports one can gather how many Blacks, Hispanics, etc. as well as males and females are working at a particular company. The USDOL also has the responsibility of certifying construction unions. Thus, it also can easily report on the racial demographics of a particular union hall and the utilization of those workers.

Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) are agreements between an owner, such as a city, county, state, etc. and a coalition of construction unions (all trades). Excluded out of contracting will be nonunion shops or nonunion shops that refuse to abide by the local union rules. As a result there will be very little Black, Hispanic, etc. work utilization. 98% of all Black owned construction companies are nonunion. Obviously, if you find a working PLA you will find virtually none of us.

The city of Philadelphia along with the Philadelphia School System agreed to Project Labor Agreements a few years ago. The exercise was a total disaster in terms of diversity and it eventually ended as a result of public outrage. Remember, Philadelphia is 55%+ Black and 10%+ Hispanic. Why on earth was the city agreeing to a PLA? It's the power of the construction union lobby and the knowledge of what "price" to offer campaign coffers. During this horror the Black community of this city paid greatly. Definitely, the unemployment rate, crime rate, despair rate and any other terrible rate you can think of was accelerated.

So it comes with great surprise that Mayor Michael A. Nutter (Black) signed a new executive order to "re-establish project labor agreements for the bidding process". Insanity has been compared to doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. The

Mayor is not insane. But when he states “This new PLA policy will aim to ensure stability, efficiency, quality and diversity for every major public works project in the city. These contracts will also have provisions to ensure that city residents, minorities and women are included in all of the city’s major construction projects.” We just can’t believe that and certainly anyone of such intelligence knows it deep, down inside also. Blacks in Philadelphia have just entered new and more dangerous economic ground.

The Mayor, City Council or anyone else of authority could simply ask the regional Department of Labor office to provide a detailed report on the ethnic and gender demographics of the local union halls. By viewing this inventory of workforce one could easily determine that the overwhelming majority of these crafts cannot possibly meet the goals of 32% minority workforce and 50% city residents. You can’t make “5” out of “2”. Why are they trying to sell this falsehood? The activists of Philadelphia should track this and make those responsible to “bleed” politically. The majority of the population of a large American city has just been sold-out once again. Watch the increase in murder, robberies, car jackings and poverty caused by the unemployment this is going to cause. There will be a terrible social and economic price for the local citizens to pay because of this. All this, for the love of money –oops! I meant to say unions.

They will come up with “pre-apprentice programs”, “third party monitoring”, “oversight committees” and “public outreach” and other such public relations gimmicks to deter the public’s view of this atrocity. Remember, construction unions have had 46 years (1965 – 2011) to adequately integrate. They aren’t going to do it now. Why should we play with “fire” without expecting to get burned? Construction union only projects are racist and none of us should entertain the evil concept.

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