

VW Officials Outraged Over Courier Articles

Pittsburgh Courier *Auto's* *VW*

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NEW STANTON — Volkswagen Westmoreland officials, who until recently were either "unavailable for comment" or simply "would not discuss this or any other employment matter with outsiders" personally visited the office of the New Pittsburgh Courier and expressed their outrage with a company leak alleging that William Brock, administrator of the company's equal employment opportunity program, was transferred because "they had something on him."

Black employees concerned about Brock's

well being as well as the fate of the affirmative action program which insures minority representation on all levels of employment and is currently in need of an administrator, disclosed that "Brock had been transferred to the production department to further his career development." While company officials would not confirm or elaborate on this action the disgruntled employees interpreted this as a possible "demotion," a retaliatory measure that had to be taken lying down.

Accompanied by Brock, a production department employee, who notes that "people

who know me know that you can't put a price on my head," Chet Bahn, public relations director, and Leroy DeLisle, personnel director, Richard Cummins plant manager asserted that "nothing could be any further from the truth. Rather than having to hold something over his head I'd get rid of him. I don't work that way. If I hadn't been on an airplane in route to my destination I would have turned around and came here yesterday."

Crediting Brock with the establishment and development of an equal employment opportunity program, inclusive of ten percent minority representation, Cummins

revealed that in his estimation "Bill took on one of the most unpopular jobs in the entire car plant. He was assigned the tough task of recognizing prejudice on the part of management and going out and recruiting Blacks for employment. He did a super job of addressing prejudice and the overall employment problems in the plant."

Noting that "VW has a vested interest in Brock's personal growth and development with the company," he added that "Bill did an outstanding job, but we ran out of things for him to do in this area . . . he had gone as far as he could go.

It is necessary to move someone of Bill's stature and capability around the plant because a new plant is in the making. We have already lost 50 percent of our top staff and when the new plant is opened we will be expected to supply over 35 percent. We are attempting to eliminate that 'Blacks are the last hired first fired' syndrome by identifying Black potential and begin moving them very

rapidly, so that Blacks will be represented all the way up."

According to Cummins and his entourage, "much work has gone into the development of VW Westmoreland's Equal Employment Opportunity posture. Its beginning preceded the recent demonstrations and public forums, the hiring of an EEO administrator and management's decision to hire without regard to race, sex, color . . . Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and others, some greater and some lessor, fought relentlessly to open heretofore tautly locked doors."

Noting that a recent article "borders on the verge of irresponsibility," the representatives of VW management, indicated that "we feel the New Pittsburgh Courier may be hampering such efforts by helping to breed discontent among employees who were hired through the recent efforts of management in conjunction with community leaders. If this discontent should

have as one of its results, the exodus of any of the many high potential minorities currently in our employe, we all lose."

They continued "opponents of our EEO posture are probably delighted that the Courier has seen fit to become an ammunition dump against the personal integrity of our minority management personnel. It would appear that this newspaper has allowed itself to become the unwitting tool of those we fear would disagree with our efforts to establish a truly representative work force."

VW management also said, "in its efforts to keep the public informed it behooves the Courier to also inform its readers of the many positive and aggressive steps we have and will continue to take in the future toward equal employment opportunity. We acknowledge that there is prejudice and injustice in our society. When we take arms against these problems it would be nice to know that those we presume to be allies won't turn out to be the biggest problem."