

Facts
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News



By Horace White
Negroes-Societies
Businessmen *Booker T.*
Made Dupes!!

The Booker T. Washington Trade Association held its brotherhood luncheon two weeks ago. At this luncheon Mayor Albert Cobo had a prominent seat. He was given some kind of an ovation. There was much kowtowing, bowing, and scraping to him.

For almost a month previous to this luncheon, the liberal element of the white and Negro community was expressing displeasure at the kind of statements the Mayor had been making in rejecting Mrs. Beulah Whitby as head of the commission on Community Relations.

Mayor Cobo did an unmanly and undemocratic thing by rejecting Mrs. Whitby as he did. No one objected to his right to make the choice. The ordinance gives him that right—but to do it in an undemocratic manner is something that galled every right thinking citizen in our city.

The committee of the brotherhood luncheon for the Booker T. Washington Trade Association said in effect, when Mayor Cobo was invited to the luncheon, "Mr. Mayor, we were just kidding. We want you to like us so much that you can throw mud in our faces and treat us like little children — but we don't mind. We just want to bask in the sunlight of your eminent person. We don't have any backbone. We just can't stand to have you say that you don't like us, poor us. Mr. Mayor, please come and grace our table and let us applaud you. Your undemocratic and unfair statements we have forgiven."

This is the kind of action on the part of certain Negroes in the community that makes one want to vomit. How can you even get a sense of personal worth and dignity by this kind of thinking? What hope is there for our children to look for dignity when one week we are up in arms about treatment received and statements that are made from deliberate misrepresentations, and then the next week we give him a place of honor and praise?

How can the Mayor, himself, have respect for people who do this? He must feel that we are a weak, meaningless lot. Here he was speaking to some of the leading citizens of the town at the Booker T. Washington luncheon. What a farce! It is a wonder that the businessmen and professional men didn't get up and walk out rather than lend their presence to

such an affront to their personal dignity.

One may forgive the older men in the Booker T. Washington Trade Association. One may understand how John Dancy, through his long years, may not want to have the displeasure of the Mayor, even after the Mayor personally insulted him in his own office—but one cannot take without anger and resentment, young men who are coming into leadership, kowtowing, just in order to be on speaking terms with the Mayor of the town.

How can the young Negro in our community feel that he has any worth when he sees other Negroes who have supposed education and position, capitulating and graveling in the mud in order to be on speaking terms with the Mayor?

The Booker T. Washington Trade Association should be ashamed of itself for having entered into this debacle. At least they should have permitted the sun to go down on one fight before they embraced the Mayor with applause in the name of brotherhood.

Ladies and gentlemen of the Booker T. Washington Trade Association, you people have a right to be ashamed of yourselves. Are people giving you their support in order to have you institute a program that insults their profoundest dignity? Or do the people expect some leadership and courage from its business and professional people. Somebody caused the Booker T. Washington Trade Association to grovel in the dust at its annual "Brotherhood" luncheon.