

Gibson

June 17, 1970

Mayor Kenneth Gibson
The City Hall
Newark, New Jersey

Dear Mr. Mayor:

Let me be one of the first in the Middle West to congratulate you for your victory, for your intelligence, and for your political savvy. May I wish for you and predict an outstanding career as Mayor of an old well known northeastern city which in recent years has earned an image, some of it not so complimentary.

May I suggest to you a project which I would like to see developed in Newark while the "victory iron" is hot. I suggest that you put on a campaign to be named "Clean Up Week in the Name of Health and Anti-pollution". Appeal to your supporters and others who would join them, forming a voluntary army of wives, mothers, and teenagers to clean up around their homes and in the alleys behind their homes, and the interior of their homes, to put the garbage and trash in plastic bags and appeal to voluntary truck owners to supplement the City garbage haulers, to clean up your city and thereby remove some of the image that it has around the world by now as being a dirty, congested city with racial conflicts. I suggest that you set up a lottery which will appeal to many of the poor and give prizes for the best job; and upon this campaign launch a continuing education program for people to clean up and thereby prevent rats and the spread of disease and the tragedy of pollution. This could demonstrate that people have trash, garbage and litter around them not because of race nor because of desire or preference of the poor, but because largely of great population density and poor housing. I suggest that you appeal to printers to get out slogans and to show themselves and the world that the population in the inner-city can contribute greatly to clearing up the garbage problem, the litter problem, the rat problem, and the transmission of disease. I see this as a thing which should be done by voluntary organizations with the health department, garbage and city cleaning departments supporting. I see it also as an effort to get ahead and change the image of this city and to let the

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world know that you are capable of conceiving such a voluntary program. The distribution of plastic bags and encouragement of individuals on an educational basis to wrap garbage and trash in a manner which they have never done before and to offer them something for this is the essence of my suggestion.

Keep up your good work, and people all over the world are with you.

Sincerely yours,

Leonidas H. Berry, M.D.
Recent Past President
National Medical Association

LHB:db

P.S.: If you can find the time, please glance at an article entitled, "The Flying Black Medics" in the June issue of the Ebony Magazine, a project which I organized for Cairo, Illinois.