

**Powell Says**

# Freeze Makes Affirmative Action Difficult

On Thursday, Aug. 24, City Manager Orville H. Powell visited the Chronicle offices for Q&A interview. Powell has been city manager for five years.

**Q. Give us an overview of what the citizens can expect from city government during the balance of the fiscal year?**

**A. We've got a pretty active program of services this year. As far as the normal services citizens expect, the level will be about**

**expect. We are in a job freeze until we save \$200,000 and depending on where the vacancies occur, that might cause some service levels to drop, but I doubt if it will be too noticeable.**

**That job freeze will have to last at least six months and probably the full year. The first month, it saved \$18,000, which is not enough. If we don't do better than that we won't be able to meet the payroll come the end of May or June.**

**We going to have to hold more positions open. Yet that's tough because a lot of the positions we have are emergency positions. We've got to keep operations like the water plant and the sewage treatment open. They've got to have operators. If you have vacancies there, you've got to fill them.**

**You've got to keep a certain level of fire and police protection. So it's going to be tough to save the \$200,000 but we've got to do it.**

**Of course the community development program will not be affected. None of your federally-funded programs, which really make up most of the city's budget will. It's only those operations funded by the general property tax. That's basically your traditional ones—fire, police, sanitation and streets.**

**Q. Describe for us a typical day in the office for Orville Powell?**

**A. Really, there's not such a thing as a typical day. That's what makes the job pretty interesting. Since we have so many different kinds of operations, you never really quite know what's going to go wrong on any given day. But you can almost always count on something going astray.**

**In a typical day, I can**

**expect from 12 to as many as 100 complaints depending on what kinds of things we have happening. The last couple of weeks have been kind of slow. I don't know whether it's because people are on vacation or what, but I thought maybe my phones been out of order.**

**On any given day, especially following any major decision, I'll hear from a lot of people opposing it. You can almost always on any major decision count on a lot of people being opposed**

**those who are in favor; you just have to assume there are some folks who are in agreement with that.**

**Q. How many blacks do you see in a week's time?**

**A. It's hard to say.**

**Q. Do you feel that you and your top administrators get adequate input from the black community?**

**A. Well, I think the black community is a better judge of that than we are. If I thought we didn't, we'd try and do something about it. But you never know for sure. I think our black aldermen will certainly let me know if they think I'm not getting proper input. But, again, unless something is bothering folks at a particular time, you normally don't hear from them. If you touch their pocketbook or something like that, you're going to hear plenty.**

**Q. The aldermen have made some pretty strong statements about you. At one point, it was reported they asked you to resign. What is the basis of that?**

**A. I Quite frankly don't know. It came as a surprise because just a week or so before, they had expressed satisfaction when I was considering the Fort Worth job and they have also expressed to me that the article cast a different light than what they meant. They weren't so upset that they really wanted me to resign.**

**Q. Well, didn't they come right out and say that?**

**A. Well, they came out and said it and then Mrs. Burke said in a newspaper article, "Did I really say that." Mrs. Newell has certainly indicated that she didn't mean that. So, I don't know. When you**

**have nine bosses, it's seldom that all of them are happy with you at any given time.**

**Q. In reference to the question about black input, the fact that the aldermen have been at odds with you...**

**A. Well, have they been at odds with me or have they been at odds with the affirmative action program that was passed by the Board of Aldermen and then reaffirmed by the Board of Aldermen?**

**only carry out the board of Aldermen's directions, I don't set any policies. I hire people based on the qualifications as set out by the Board of Aldermen in job descriptions and in the pay ranges set out by them and really**

**So I was carrying out an affirmative action plan that had been approved by the Board of Aldermen, it was a previous board, but it hasn't been changed and it still hasn't been changed as of this date.**

**Q. How are you dealing with the promotion of Al Beaty as assistant city manager although he's also carrying out his old job as personnel director?**

**A. That's the situation until we get through this job freeze. Al Beaty has the same position I had when I was assistant city manager, in charge of all staff operations.**

**Q. How do you explain that in terms of other promotions that have been made—if a position held by a black is not going to be filled, then why were some other positions filled?**

**A. Any staff function will be frozen. That's the kind of thing we can get along without as opposed to sewer treatment operators or water plant operators or sanitation workers. That trash has got to get picked up. We can double up on staff functions for a while.**

**Q. How do you explain the three promotions you recently made?**

**A. Reassignments.**

**Q. Reassignments.**

**A. The story never really got out on that as much as we tried to get it out. I actually lost positions in**



**that. During the budget, I gave up an assistant city manager's position. You have to have somebody looking over public safety. That was downgraded. You didn't need as high a position as an assistant city manager. We downgraded that from grade 44 to grade 43.**

**Joines is in. His job as director of evaluation was eliminated. That position was combined with the budget office. That's one lost there.**

**There was one secretary lost there. So we gave up an assistant city managers' position and an evaluation director's position and a secretary's position and instead moved the person who as evaluation director in as public safety coordinator, which was a position recommended by the citizen's committee on public safety.**

**Q. So, in this case, you've lost positions but you haven't lost the people. Is**

**the case of a black, you've got the position but you've lost a body. Instead of having four blacks in top level positions, you now have three.**

**A. It's pure economics. I've got to save \$200,000 or not make the payroll. Some positions have to be frozen. And just because a black held a position doesn't mean that position is a black position for me.**

**Q. But in view of the**

**A. You see, I've got a number of things working against me. I've been in a job freeze—I was in a job freeze for 18 months. We got out for six months and they put me right back into a job freeze. I can't hire people and save money by keeping positions open. Of the two, which is the more important.**

**Well, to me, the more important is to insure that I meet the payroll come May and June for the employees we've got on board. Until we get \$200,000 saved, I'm not sure I can meet that payroll. So, I've got to hold vacant every position I can hold vacant until we get**

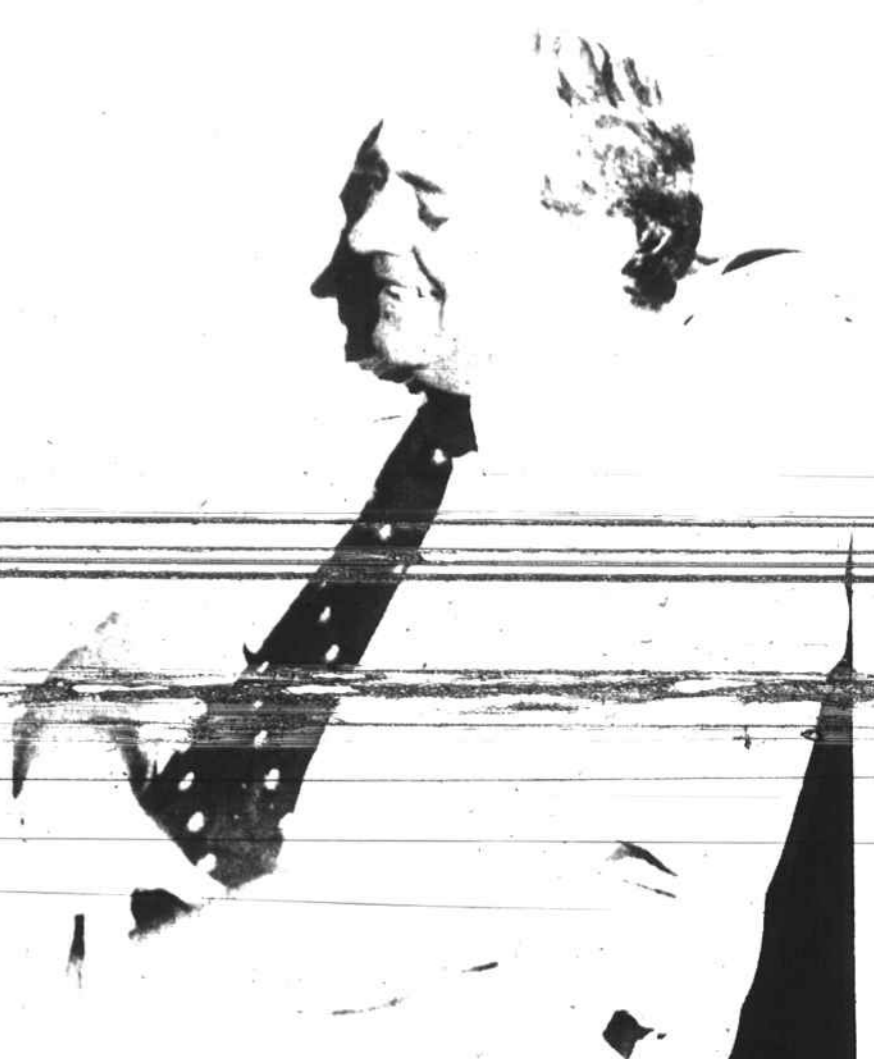
**that savings. That's the kind of bind, the kind of thing we tried to explain to the aldermen. I've been losing positions. You can't lose positions on a very steady workforce, we have very little turnover and expect to do much. I've asked for training positions, where we could bring people along. But of course you can't do that without money.**

**Q. So you're between a rock and a hard place.**

**A. Yes, I sometimes wonder why did this happen to me? Why didn't this happen before I became manager? I don't know how lasting this feeling of reduced governmental expenditures is going to be. It could have an effect where I'd lose even more jobs.**

**When you have a very stable work force like we have and you've got to have an expanding workforce to do much in the way of affirmative action, or the positions just aren't there otherwise.**

**Q. Another complaint we get regarding affirmative action is that most of the blacks employed in city government are in the de-**



**Orville Powell. departments that are federal-funded? most of the blacks are falling into your federal category?**

**A. Well, I don't know. I don't have a break out like that.**

**Q. For instance, Human Services.**

**A. Well, Human Services is primarily black. We treat federally funded employees different than most cities. We bring them in as permanent employees. We get our money from so many different ways that if we started setting up and slicing off and saying 'Well now, we pay out of Powell Bill funds from the state, so you're a state employee'.**

**We bring all the revenues in and put them in a pool and fund our operations from them and we don't classify people as state employees or federal employees.**

**Q. How do it happen that**

**A. Because that's where your job, your personnel expansion has been. We adding there. But in your traditional areas, where you don't have much turnover and you don't have much expansion, you don't have much room.**

**Q. It has been said that when Jack Bond left, that you missed an opportunity to promote another black within the city government...**

**A. I didn't think I had another black in this organization this high who was ready for a promotion. I don't think I do anybody any good if I feel they really can't handle a job. You've got the person's dissatisfaction you've got the organization's dissatisfaction and I'll guarantee See Page 15**

## The Acceptance of Change

By Naomi C. McLean Business Writer



This world in which we live is never static...new ideas, new methods, new items come thick and fast. To learn to live gracefully with changes, to examine, ponder, weed out the good from the bad, to move with the times is vital if we are to make living a success, therefore we must accept changes, and initiate them as well.

It is too easy to stay within our own small ruts, doing the same things, seeing the same people, going the same places. This trend of life demands nothing from us, asking only that we accept and make changes for progress, and of course progress brings problems.

Change demands much of us, but if we are to improve, to grow, to mature, we must meet its demands, no matter how difficult they may seem at

the time. And, in return, we will learn to live as people should...honestly, open-mindedly, bravely and joyously.

The growth of a business is a sign of progress, and progress always brings changes. It's up to the executive who wants to succeed to adapt himself to new methods, new circumstances, new people. How you accept them is a measure of your stature as a person, realizing a self-confident executive or person generally speaking accepts changes as a challenge and a chance to grow. The real fact, change is the order of the day and the one thing we know very well about tomorrow, next month and next year, all will be different.

Beneath all changes lies the force of character - an understanding and a prac-

tice of the everyday qualities which are considered. Step by step we can accept changes, and step by step, we can initiate them. The person who is hard to satisfy moves forward, and ready for changes.

The person who sits back comfortably and is contented with what he has accomplished moves backward, and he doesn't want to think about changes, therefore he doesn't continue progressing.

We are all progressing or retrogressing all the time. To progress, we have to be discontented with what we are now doing and the way we are doing it. Realizing we are discontented, we begin thinking about changes we want to make for growth and progress. It is then we think of new ideas and methods to enable us to live gracefully in a world which is never static.



By Mrs. Dan Gerber

Many health experts are concerned about tooth decay in young children. To protect your baby's teeth, avoid using a bottle as a pacifier at nap or bedtime. Prolonged contact of baby teeth with juice (or formula) can promote dental caries.

If the bottle remains in the baby's mouth, the saliva cannot neutralize juice acidity, which can harm tooth enamel.

Let me reassure you there is a place for juice in a baby's diet. Gerber strained juices are an important source of vitamin C and are naturally sweet. After the child is 6 to 8 weeks old, juices may be fed from a bottle or training cup. Remember that your child should be in an upright position when eating or drinking.

## Street Project To Block West End Traffic

Beginning Sept. 5, work will begin to improve the city's busiest intersection--Five Points West--where First Street, Miller Street, Country Club Road and North and South Stratford roads converge.

Motorists are requested to avoid the intersection by seeking alternate routes whenever possible while work is in progress.

Regular work on the project will be Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Crews will also do some Saturday work the same hours.

Motorists sometimes will experience delays of several minutes and one-way traffic during non-rush hours, 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Delays will be most prevalent as dirt is hauled on trucks from the south side of South Stratford Road across the intersection to fill in the east side of North

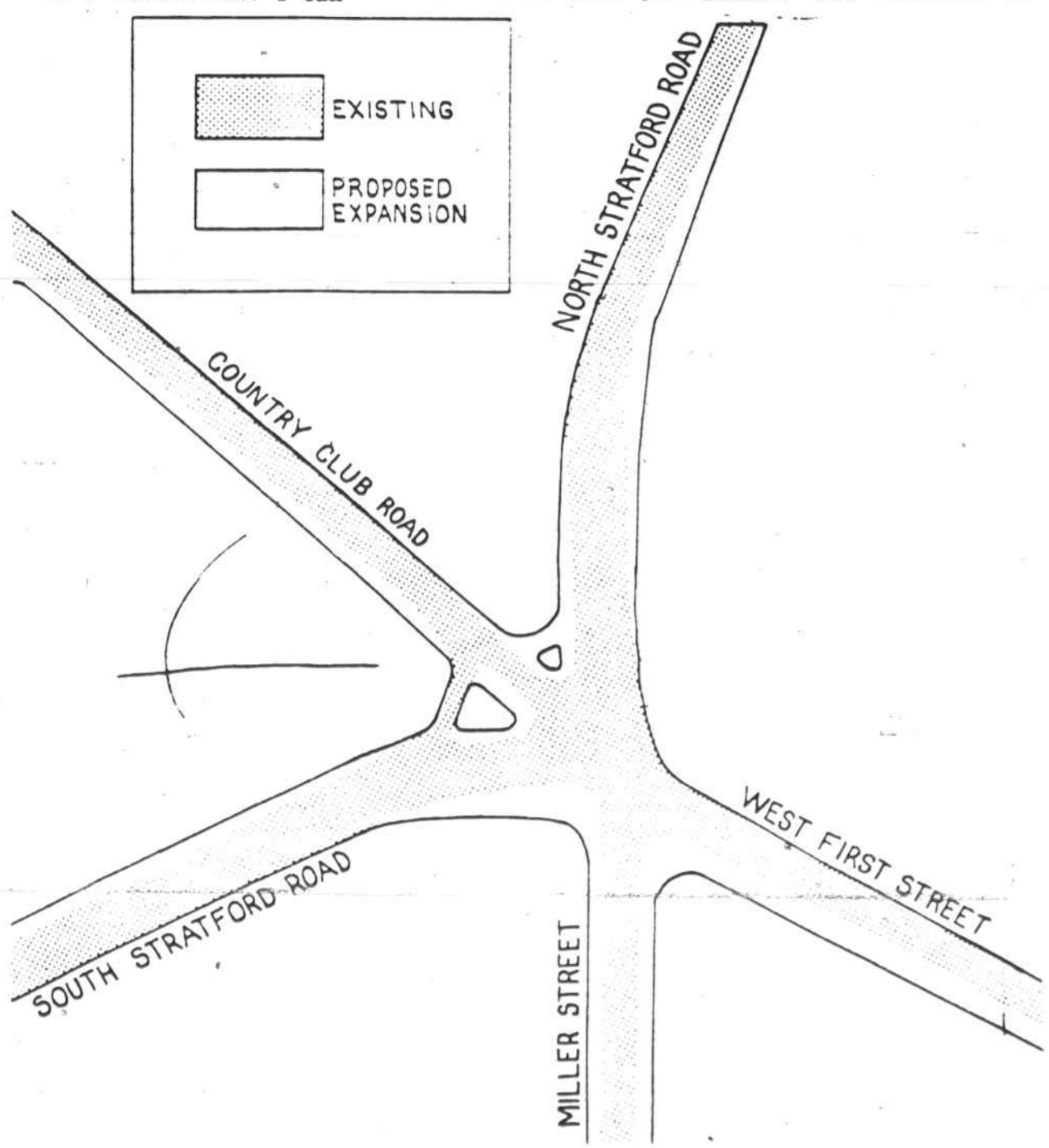
L Stratford Road. From about Sept. 20 to Oct. 20, North Stratford Road from Country Club Road to Runnymeade Road will be closed completely to traffic.

From about Dec. 1 to Dec. 15, traffic will be detoured around the part of South Stratford Road that approaches the intersection.

"The major part of the work that will slow down traffic should be finished by Christmas, and the whole project is scheduled to be completed by June, 1979," said Al Ray of the city's Engineering Division.

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