

# Aldermen Split Over Plan

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comment about the proposal because there was never a motion on it.

"Larry and Vivian objected to what the city had and I figured it was up to them to approve it or disapprove it," said Groce.

He continued about the city's previous affirmative action plan which expired last year, "Anybody could have lived with what they proposed last week. What we've had has been good, especially since Stuart has been here."

Groce said that he didn't feel that it mattered one way or the other whether the city adopted the proposed plan or not. "There's a federal law, so I don't think an affirmative action plan city-wide is necessary," he said.

Alderman Robert S. Northington agreed. "My attitude is that the 1964 Civil Rights Act and all subsequent acts say that it is illegal to discriminate against anyone. If you adhere to that federal law, you are not discriminating. The federal law should be sufficient," he said.

Northington said that in his opinion, breaking the federal law was worse than breaking a local affirmative action policy and that enforcing the federal law was up to the city manager and his staff.

"Treating everyone the same should be law. We don't need a city-wide affirmative action policy, because we've got federal laws," he said, adding that had the board been called upon to vote on the proposal, he would have voted against it.

Alderman Vivian Burke said that the city has not

done near enough in affirmative action to suit her.

"There are still departments in City Hall that have no blacks," she said.

According to Mrs. Burke, the 1980 affirmative action plan had departments where blacks and women and other minorities were not employed or did not get promoted like white men. She said the reason for this was "conservatism." The other aldermen are embracing Reagan's concept and forgetting the people that they actually represent. We have minorities who are more than qualified for city jobs, but people are becoming conservative," she said.

Mrs. Burke said that she, like Little, will refuse to vote on the plan as it is now.

"I am for fair employment for everyone and that's what I'm working for," she said, adding that "the city manager has a responsibility too and that is to see that people get fair employment."

Alderman Floyd Burge said that affirmative action "is being carried too far."

"Affirmative action is alright in its place, but enough is enough. Whoever is qualified should get the job and we have equal rights a plenty," he said.

Burge told the Chronicle how he sometimes will transact business or go to City Hall just to make observations. "I'd go down there with some old work clothes on and people are down there talking to their in-laws and out-laws on the phone and not doing what they've been hired to do. They can't wait on people for talking on the phone and they keep right on doing it in front of me until someone recognizes me," he said.

Burge said that he will vote against any affirmative action plan.

"No matter what you do, it's not enough and some of the white people are fed up with it," he said.

City Manager Bill Stuart said that he was "very surprised," when the aldermen did not vote on the plan.

"I had the belief that they would adopt it or take some action," he said, noting that the board of aldermen makes the policies.

"The main thing is to make sure that we are an equal opportunity employer and that requires making a number of actions."

Stuart said that Winston-Salem could function with or without an affirmative action plan and that he did endorse the plan presented to the board last week.

The only alderman pleased with the proposed plan was Jon DeVries.

"I would have voted for it as it was presented," DeVries said. "Goals," he said, were the key to getting a plan that all the aldermen could live with.

"We need to try to set some new goals. I think the city does a better job with affirmative action when it has goals," he said.

Alderman Virginia Newell, a proponent of affirmative action, who was absent last week said she definitely was not pleased with the city's proposed new plan.

"No one is pleased with a plan where black people are not fairly represented. I will not vote on any plan that doesn't benefit blacks," she said.

## Committee Meeting Set

The Committee to Promote Black Ownership will meet at 10 a.m. Saturday at Winston Mutual Life Insurance Co. on Fifth Street. According to committee chairperson Virginia Newell, proposals for developing the East Winston Shopping Center will be heard. A report on the progress of Mechanics and Farmers Bank will also be given. The public is invited to participate.



Simon Johnson

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## Housing

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Each public official spoke briefly. Senator Ward and Rep. Tennille said that they favored fair housing, but that a request for enabling legislation which did not have the unanimous support of the local governing body would not stand a chance of being enacted. They mentioned the policy.

Senator Cavanagh did not indicate his position. He said the policy was made by Democrats and that because of the composition of the legislature, if the Democrats introduced the legislation, they had enough strength to pass it.

Alderman Burke spoke in support of fair housing. She said it is fair and the right thing to do. Alderman Newell expressed the same sentiments. She said that she was disturbed that there had to be a unanimous vote on anything as controversial as fair housing. Adding, some of the housing in my ward are unfit for human habitation. A person should be able to live where he wants to and can afford to.

Members of the audience supported fair housing.

Some said the issue is moral, not political; deplored the fact that a Viet Cong would receive more consideration in a housing matter than a native black American veteran. They called upon the city to solve its local problems and add fair housing to "excellence in art" as one of the selling points of our city.

Noting that opposition to fair housing came from the realtors, a realtor present said that their opposition was not unanimous as she was for fair housing.

During the early part of the meeting Senator Ward left stating that he could no longer listen to that "stuff" from Sen. Cavanagh. He was denounced and then complimented upon his return after being away some 40 minutes. Rep. Tennille absented herself from the meeting for about 10 minutes.

The meeting ended with the group having the assurance that Senator Ward would work to get the unanimous policy changed. If the policy is not changed, the group expressed the hope that the legislation would be introduced anyway. They pledged that they would come to Raleigh to lobby for passage.

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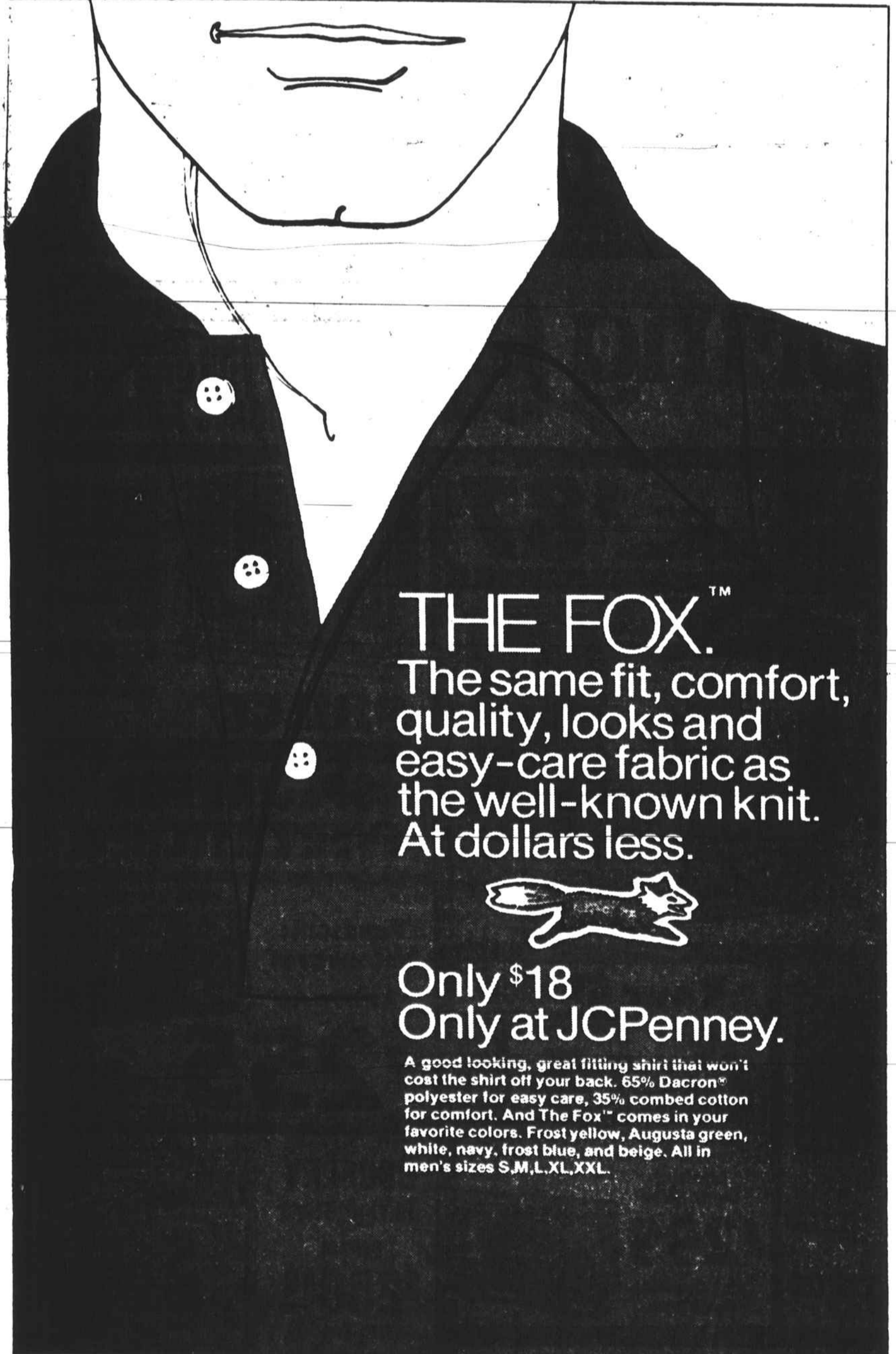
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