

Diversity Training = Spam

- ✘ As far as I'm concerned, diversity training is like spam. Too many people get it and nobody wants it.

I recently read that the U.S. Agriculture Department has hired a consulting firm to advise it on "diversity" matters. Agriculture Secretary, Tom Vilsack has "taken a number of actions to make his department more sensitive to civil rights issues." This comes on the heels of the recent Congressional approval of a \$4.6 billion settlement of a discrimination lawsuit filed by black and Native American farmers. There are more lawsuits pending.

Interesting that over at the DOJ just the opposite seems to be happening. Two officials, J. Christian Adams and Christopher Coates, testified before the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, that the DOJ repeatedly showed "hostility" toward prosecuting cases which involved black defendants. But I digress.

Let's get back to diversity training. Why is it even necessary? What other country is as diverse as ours? Didn't we recently elect the first half-Black/half-White President? Doesn't that say anything for this country and its people?

This all reminds me of my own experience when I worked for the County of Los Angeles in the 1990s and required to sit through hours and hours of co-called "diversity training" to make me a better lawyer.

In my opinion, this is more political correctness gone amok. Smooth talkers could put together some worthless seminar to "teach" people about sensitivities and bias – all at a very substantial price to the corporation or entity which feels compelled to provide this service to its employees.

We were all subjected to diversity training which revolved around Native Americans, Mexican-Americans, Men/Women, and, of

course, the LGTB community. My experience in the courtroom was one that did not see any real bias against homosexuals, but I've seen some against the transgender community. I heard snickering and snide remarks, particularly from homosexuals and a lot of liberals, when that 6-foot tall woman who "doesn't look quite right" was spotted in court. It all comes down to hearts and minds – laws and forced training aren't going to change attitudes.

All this training was to make us more sensitive to the needs of the parents and children in the dependency system. I heard a lot of argument from attorneys who represented minority children when they were placed in white homes but not once did I hear anything when a white child was placed in a Spanish-speaking home. Sounds like a double standard to me.

But the most ridiculous diversity training I had to participate in involved the young black community. I'm sure everyone's seen some young guy with his pants hanging down around his butt and his underwear showing. It's got to be the most stupid look I've ever seen and I'd like to see one of these fools try and run in those pants. Well, according to our "diversity instructor," this so-called "style" originated at Riker's Island in New York, where prisoners aren't permitted to have belts. (Since then, I've also read that this style signifies sexual orientation or, at least, sexual willingness, in prisons.)

According to the instructor, black youth adopted this "look" because it's part of their "heritage" even though it reflected a negative segment of the population, namely, prisoners.

Well, I'd never heard of anything so stupid. So, in my inimitable fashion, I raised my hand during the seminar and asked the following: "My father came to the United States in 1924 from Germany. Based on your analysis, would it be okay for me to don a swastika because, even though it reflects a negative segment of the German population, it is part of my

heritage?”

After stunned silence from fellow attorneys, the instructor attempted to explain away why my example was not analogous to the droopy pants look even though I knew I was spot on. Afterwards, several of my co-workers absolutely agreed with my analogy.

Needless to say, I thought the whole diversity training was a big waste of time although it did count towards my continuing education required by the State Bar of California. Up until I read the article about the Agriculture Department, I hadn't a clue that diversity training was still being touted in this country. I thought we'd moved way past this.

Apparently, we haven't. There are still “workforce diversity specialists” who go around the corporate world teaching people how to relate to one another. For example, one website I came across lists the politically correct terms now acceptable in the corporate world. For example, you shouldn't say “guys” when speaking to a mixed group of people. You should say, “friends,” “folks,” or “group.” You're not supposed to say “no culture,” when referring to parts of the U.S. where the opera and the theater are scarce or nonexistent but rather “lacking European culture.” My favorite is that I'm no longer an “old person” but rather “chronologically advantaged.” Does this mean that young people are “chronologically disadvantaged?” Sounds politically incorrect to me.

Bottom line: these are money-making industries by people who've convinced corporations that it's necessary, especially if they're after government contracts. And the corporation, afraid of looking insensitive or something even worse, kowtows to this type of political correctness. I see no difference between this type of training and the shakedown of corporation, like NASCAR, by the Rev. Jesse Jackson in years past. Remember when NASCAR gave \$250,000 to Jackson's Rainbow/Push Coalition to develop programs to try and correct

perceived racism and animosity towards blacks.

For how many years, the private sector has been bullied into diversity training. Now we the taxpayers are spending, God only knows, how much to "train" the employees over at the Agriculture Department. Whatever it is, it's a waste of our money.

I don't get it, but if you do, God bless you.