

# Prosecutor nailed for too white staff

**BY PAT MURPHY**  
STAFF WRITER

Oakland County Prosecutor Richard Thompson came under fire last week for not having enough black assistants among his 88-person staff.

Hubert Price, the only black member of the Oakland County Board of Commissioners, accused Thompson of not doing enough to hire blacks and "alleviate the widespread perception the prosecutor's office as a bastion of racism."

About seven percent of the county's population is black and about 40 percent of the jail population is black, Price noted during a meeting of the county board's

personnel committee Wednesday. But only two of 89 assistant prosecutors are black, the Pontiac Democrat said during a discussion on the status of minorities within the county's 3,500 workforce.

Informed of the allegations, Thompson said he does not apologize for his hiring policies or record. "We hire the best talent available... black, white or Hispanic."

Thompson said Price's comments were at least partly motivated by politics. "He didn't mention other county departments have worse records than ours on affirmative action."

Furthermore, he prefaced his comments with a pitch for Bill

Clinton and Al Gore. It was an obvious political ploy.

One who apparently agrees is Commissioner Marilyn E. Goding, R-Bloomfield Hills, who is chairman of the personnel committee.

"I was appalled at the tone" of newspaper articles on our discussion on affirmative action, Goding wrote in a letter sent to the prosecutor Friday. "In my opinion, you have acted on every suggestion offered to hire black attorneys and have gone the extra mile to do so."

Thompson received another vote of confidence last August from newly appointed Judge Denise Langford-Morris, Oakland's only black circuit judge

who spent two years working for Thompson as an assistant prosecutor.

During an interview with The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, Langford-Morris credited Thompson — and his predecessor, then prosecutor L. Brooks Patterson — with helping her get a sound legal background.

They treated her like all other assistant prosecutors, Langford-Morris said. "They worked us very hard," she said, "something that helped my development as an attorney."

Langford-Morris was appointed by Republican Gov. John Engler on the recommendation of Patterson.

# Senator attacks state for anti-parent bias

**BY TIM RICHARD**  
STAFF WRITER

A state Senate committee chair has joined critics of the so-called Michigan Model for health education, attacking state officials as being anti-parent.

Sen. Gil DiNello, D-Clinton Township, called for scrapping the State Board of Education, selling the publishing rights to the Michigan Model, and passing bills protecting parental rights.

"The social engineers in the Michigan Department of Education are trying to make public schools surrogate parents," said DiNello, "and our kids are paying the price for this ideological foray."

But the report and far-reaching recommendations are far from final, said Sen. Robert Geake, R-Northville, a member of the four-

man panel.

"I haven't had time to study it. We agreed that it's not the final report," said Geake, who is in the final days of a congressional campaign.

"It's supposed to be circulated to the membership. What I saw was a very rough draft marked preliminary, not for release." It somehow got out, so he (DiNello) released it so no one would say he was playing favorites," Geake said.

The report was circulated to the Capitol press corps and marked "preliminary." It was also accompanied by a two-page news release from DiNello. A maverick who frequently supports Republicans, DiNello is the only Democrat who chairs a committee in the GOP-run Senate.

DiNello's panel held public hearings in Plymouth, Rochester

and seven other cities around the state. Other members are Doug Carl, a conservative Republican from Utica running for Congress, and Jim Berryman, a moderate Democrat from Adrian. DiNello's preliminary report and news release did not suggest the other three had signed or agreed.

The hearings were dominated by a handful of critics such as R. Kraft Bell of Northville and the DADS Foundation of Kalamazoo. Defenders of the Michigan Model say 95 percent of local districts have adopted it without controversy, calling critics a handful of right-wing religious zealots.

A Department of Education spokesman said a State Board committee is working on revisions to satisfy some of the critics.

But a DADS Foundation leader called the Michigan Model "so tainted and contaminated, it can't be modified."

Thrust of the Michigan Model,

according to the department spokesman, is to teach students how to make choices — to go beyond telling them to listen to their parents and church and help them understand why parents and church gave their advice.

DiNello advocates a law that mandates schools to teach "abstinence from pre-marital sexual activity." Critics want "moral absolutes" to be taught rather than "personal choice."

DiNello and the critics also want children to be taught that parents — not school personnel or peers — are the first, and chief, source of information on sex, alcohol, drugs, AIDS, birth control, pregnancy and other stressful situations.

DiNello called for a U.S. Justice Department probe of the state Education and Public Health departments, charging officials held training sessions on "how to discredit Michigan Model opponents."

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**BACKGROUND:** A graduate of Harvard and the University of Michigan Law School, Martin Doctoroff was a Special Agent for the FBI before building a 27-year career as a trial lawyer. In 1987 he was appointed to the Michigan Court of Appeals — our state's second highest court. His peers elected him Chief Judge in 1992.

**CHARACTER:** As a lawyer, Martin Doctoroff's intelligence and preparedness benefitted his clients. Now as a judge, his integrity and vast trial experience benefit all Michigan citizens. Applying organizational skills and concern for promptness and efficiency, he brings increased order to his court. The Oakland County Bar Association's Judicial Qualifications Committee rated him outstanding.

**EXPERIENCE:** Judge Doctoroff's views and vision have been shaped by his own legal career as well as by his many legal offices: Public Administrator for Oakland County; Special Assistant Attorney General for Michigan; Chair of the state's Attorney Discipline Board; leadership positions on county, state and national Bar Associations.

**ENDORSEMENTS:** While he has received many, from both public and private associations throughout the state, those of his colleagues are indicative of his judicial qualifications. Past presidents of the Oakland County Bar and the State Bar have given endorsements. Now he needs yours. Vote November 3.

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