

*U.N. Column*

*by Laura Parks*

**More Jobs For  
The Black Minority**

WHITE PLAINS, N.Y.---"Affirmative Action is alive and operational at General Foods." These are the words of Lee A. Archer, director of Equal Opportunity at the giant food-processing company in White Plains, NY.

Echoing the displeasure of Civil Rights activist Vernon E. Jordan with President Carter's announced intention to cut back for budgetary reasons, the funding for many agencies originally promulgated to war on poverty, Archer stressed that Affirmative Action Programs have resulted in increased employment of women and minorities in the past decade. General Foods, he added, has adhered to that program over the years. The firm's atest foray into opportunities to assist minorities resulted in several recent promotions of black personnel. Two of them won top managerial jobs. One was the promotion of Alfred Poe of Mt. Vernon, NY who rose to senior product manager in GF's Maxwell House Division with responsibility for developing marketing and sales strategy and advertising and promotion plans for the firm's Maxim Freeze-Dried Coffee. Another was the elevation of DeVerges Jones, also of Mt. Vernon, who has become product manager in the food's division for the entire New York area.

"This is the latest public reaffirmation of the company's support of its Affirmative Action Program," Archer said.

That the program is being closely observed by job holders and seekers throughout Black America is seen in the number of inquiries Archer has received on Affirmative Action in light of the Supreme Court decision in the case of the Regents of the University of California vs. Blakke.

In the Bakke case, the Supreme Court ruled by 5 to 4 that the University's policy violated the equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, that Title VI did not prohibit the use of race as a factor in an admission policy when necessary to correct the effects of past discrimination.

Speaking in the firm's name he informs all that General Foods has diligently reviewed the court's decision and that he anticipates no change in its Affirmative Action Program either as a result of the debate over the court's decision or by virtue of an Administration attempt to roll back the premise on which AA was legislated.

As one of New York's most articulate spokesmen for the rights of minorities, Archer also stressed that he has been General Food's top representative to three national civil rights organizations conventions. It was here, he said, that "I help formulate position statement expressing the firm's total support of Affirmative Action." He invited giant corporations throughout the country to "Go thou and do likewise."

The organizations Archer addressed are among the leading activists in the country---NAACP Black Leadership Conference, National Urban League Commerce and Industry Council and the National Urban Coalition.

Archer is one of the nation's foremost protagonists in the field of equal employment opportunity. He recalled that General Foods early recognized the essence of equality, that the color of the skin should not be a bar to either jobs or promotion and that women should share in the growing market for minority personnel.

"We see Affirmative Action as a positive force considered by the General Foods managing hierarchy," he said. "It has had a longstanding commitment and it will stay that way."

**NEW DAY BEGUN**

by

**Benjamin L. Hooks**



**Significance of  
National Monument**

For Black Americans, ever so preoccupied with the consuming struggle for civil rights, jobs and equality, recreational pastimes such as visiting national parks and monuments often seem a luxury that are hardly worth the effort. The simple task of scraping a living leaves little energy, money or desire to do anything else than meet in a neighborhood bar, on a street corner or visit friends and relatives. But the cultural and educational loss, as Ira Hutchinson, deputy director of the National Parks Service, noted, is real.

Commenting on this gap in the lives of so many people, Mr. Hutchinson suggested recently that a national conference be called to determine why blacks do not visit these areas as much as whites.

Some people might not be willing to go as far as calling for such a conference, seeing no immediate material gain. Nevertheless, Mr. Hutchinson's observations do merit serious consideration.

Most significant in the continuing cultural development of blacks, the traditional victims of racism and deprivation, is the mere presence of Mr. Hutchinson in a high policy-making position in the Department of the Interior. Federal agencies such as Interior, Agriculture and State have for too long been regarded as white preserves.

So his presence here, as well as that of James A. Joseph, undersecretary of Interior, should be applauded. Their positions underscore President Carter's desire to bring more minorities into policy-making positions within his administration. That Mr. Hutchinson has been able to direct attention to the need for blacks to visit America's national parks and monuments in his capacity as an official of Interior provides even more reason why demands should be intensified for more appointments of this kind.

At the same time, one is reminded of other painful aspects of the American dilemma. One is the history of Jim Crow and its continuing psychological impact on so many American citizens. No doubt, this history of humiliation affected the way people continue to behave and the heritage that is transmitted to upcoming generations.

It was only a few short years ago that blacks were barred by law, custom and fear from drinking at water fountains reserved for whites, staying at white hotels, and sharing most other public facilities that were designated for whites. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 changed that.

But up until then, blacks were limited in their travel by the mere logistics of having to plan for rest stops where they knew they would be accepted. For blacks, the mere use of toilet facilities was a trip (pun intended). Even the lowly service station most often offered no comfort. The attendant, of course, would sell blacks gasoline. But they were barred from using the restrooms.

Worth mentioning, also, is the severe flaw in American history. So much of constructive involvement and contributions by blacks have been washed out of U.S. history, that few national shrines or public monuments have any relevance or provide an emotional upliftment for blacks. When it is remembered, also, that much of American history contains another type of pain for blacks--the pain of slavery and centuries of discrimination -- one is left to marvel that blacks really bother to visit some of these monuments at all.

Yet, however unpleasant the experience might be, it is incumbent on blacks to visit and learn about any and every American monument and shrine. History is not only knowledge; but it is strength, which is a prerequisite for survival and progress in any culture or society.

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**Tommie Jackson**

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