

LeGree Daniels.....(Continued from page 7.)

Department and the State Board of Education. He is now retired. LeGree always has been devoted and dedicated to her family and she has instilled community pride in every member of the family. She has kept them involved in community affairs.

LeGree Daniels always has been very firm in all of her convictions. She commands respect and is loved by all who know her. She becomes very emotional when concerns of our youths are being discussed. "Our future rests with our young people and we must do all that is within our power to help them.

The appalling statistics of "functional illiteracy" disturbs LeGree Daniels deeply. She was stunned to learn that an alarming 44% of black youth at age 18 could not read past the 4th grade level and the figures were increasing. Another very recent report stated that the U.S. Army is now 33% black and that one out of every four of these young black soldiers entered the service at the lowest possible mental eligibility level acceptable for enlistment. They have been termed "untrainable" and make up the majority of ground backup troops doing menial chores. It

was found that these young soldiers, although eager to learn, could not read at a level to comprehend even the simplest training instructions. As an example of how the Army has attempted to cope with this situation, in one vehicle maintenance manual, there are at least 12 pictures demonstrating how to open the hood of a truck—instead of written instructions. LeGree Daniels is aware that many of these young black soldiers joined the Army because of their inability to find good jobs—and the hope that the Army would not only make men out of them but teach them skills that would be marketable later in civilian life.

As a result of these reports, LeGree Daniels has joined forces with the National Assault On Illiteracy Program (AOIP). She has even been to the White House to discuss the problem with top presidential assistants. She is making extensive plans to help organize and develop AOIP units not only in her immediate community, but all over the state of Pennsylvania. She will also be actively involved with the National Assault On Illiteracy Council. "These statistics are critical and something has to be done instantly to eradicate illiteracy with all its

devastating consequences," says LeGree Daniels.

Reaching Back

There is a favorite spot in LeGree Daniels' heart for all disadvantaged youths and younger adults—especially those who have not been given the opportunity to develop to full potential because of circumstances not of their own making. For this reason, Legree—affectionately known to them as "Miss Lee" or "Lee"—is making a concerted effort to reach back to the young dropouts, drug addicts, ex-offenders, and even youths who may be incarcerated. She is convinced that the AOIP process of having our own successful black youth and older adults *reach back* to the less fortunate is the answer—and makes it one of the best programs ever initiated to combat illiteracy. That aspect of AOIP is not new to "Lee" because she has been *reaching back* all of her life.

Active In Church Work

"Lee" Daniels has been just as actively involved in religious activities and church work as she has been in community programs and for just as long. She was one of the founders of the Tabernacle Baptist Church in 1967. There she found another golden opportunity to *reach back* to "help somebody."

And LeGree Daniels' total involvement in her community does not end here. She is continuously seeking opportunities to serve her fellowman. In 1968, LeGree served as Matron, Order of Eastern Star. She has been a Director of the Tri-County Mental Health Association and served on the Susquehanna Township Recreation Board. She has been a member of the advisory board of the Harrisburg Polyclinic Hospital. She is a chartered member of the Edgemont Recreation Association and she is an active member of the Harrisburg NAACP. Last year LeGree Daniels served as delegate from Susquehanna Township to the Tri-County Commission for Community Affairs. She was also appointed a member of the Tax Equalization Board (1980) and was staff assistant for U.S. Senator Hugh Scott.

Politically Active

LeGree Daniels is listed in "Who's Who in American Politics" and she richly deserves this distinct honor. She has been active in Republican politics most of her life. Both of her parents were ex-slaves and active in Republican politics in Philadelphia. A staunch believer in a strong two-party system, she has waged a life-long campaign to convince blacks of its merits.

She was knocking on doors in Philadel-

phia's Germantown section when it wasn't "fashionable" to be associated with the Republican party—a time when most blacks were Roosevelt Democrats. "Ironically," she says, "prior to Roosevelt, most blacks were Republicans."

All of those turbulent years of fighting an uphill battle has had its rewards for LeGree Daniels. Her political career was capped when she was recently elected chairman of the National Black Republican Council. She is a conservative and a staunch supporter of President Ronald Reagan's emphasis on self reliance. Lee is dead set against the "rely on welfare" philosophy which she says enabled the Democratic Party to cripple many of our people and force them into dependency roles. For his focus on self determination and many other reasons, she believes that Reagan is "the right man at the right time." She knows well that it takes an extremely strong black person to espouse Republican politics in this day and time when, seemingly, all of the suffering of poor blacks in this country is being attributed by many to the present Republican administration. Yet, Legree Daniels stands her ground and sees many more black leaders beginning to see the wisdom of our turning away from dependency "handouts" and beginning to do far more to "pull our communities up largely by our own bootstraps" as we seek deserved help from others.

The statuesque LeGree is just as firm in all of her convictions. Yet, she commands the respect of, and is loved by, all who know her. Once she has thought a situation through, she is not easily swayed from her position. LeGree is very adamant when she says that the Republican party under Reagan can provide a "new way" of solving our national problems. She claims that a good sign is that Reagan not only "has got us talking"—but more important "has got many of us now thinking."

Lee's National Black Republican Council is dedicated to seeing that Reagan does not fail as president. And, with LeGree Daniels at the Council's helm, they are determined that the President does not fail the black community.

Message To Black America

We can only speculate what a different and better world this would be if there were more LeGree Daniels. She admonishes all who will listen that "Americans should return to some of the older teachings—of moral obligation, family togetherness, religious faith, a willingness to serve, and community spirit." Somehow, when one leaves her presence, LeGree Daniels' real message seems to ring out loud and clear—"Lead, follow and serve, or get the hell out of the way." ■



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