

# Point of View

## The Business of Blacks Should be Business

I enjoy business. It is fun, demanding, requires you to always be at your best, and it will provide a good life for you. If this the case, why are so few blacks (about 1%) in business? And of this number, why are so few successful? Several reasons come to mind: poor family structure; inadequate education; oppression psychosis; a desire for security; ignorance of our financial system; fear of marketing outside the black community, and reluctance of blacks to do business with blacks.

You have, no doubt, observed that I have not included "racism" in the above list. Let me assure you this was not an oversight. I will no longer use the race excuse as the reason for the expanding black underclass, because I

sincerely believe that this is a copout for the failure of blacks to do for themselves.

We are so conditioned to working for somebody else that we seldom contemplate what others did in order to make jobs for us. There are ever increasing business opportunities in America; this is why so many foreigners want to come here. National black organizations should stop preaching to us about jobs and direct our attention to the very soul of America -- business.

The nitty gritty of getting ahead in America is ownership, and we don't own anything. Instead of "styling" and "show boating" in the ghetto, we need to pool our excess monies and buy our communities. Our children usually have to start from

scratch. If we own a business and die, so does the business. We do not develop sound financial plans so that our heirs will be money ahead when we die. We should learn to develop investment portfolios that are worth more when we die than when we are alive. This way our children will have occupational options instead of survival ruts.

The changing times has returned the basic responsibility for ourselves to ourselves. If blacks will not face this challenge head-on and win, we are destined to join the throw-away pop bottles that decorate our neighborhoods. The choice is ours.

--From "Anderson At Large", by Gerard A. Anderson, Charleston Chronicle, June 21, 1986

## To Be Equal

# We Need More Black Diplomats

Edward J. Perkins, our new ambassador to South Africa, faces the difficult task of opening communications with the black freedom movement there while at the same time representing an Administration whose policies have helped prop up the apartheid regime.

The Perkins appointment raises some serious



John E. Jacob

State Department, and only about 250 blacks out of the 4,000 foreign service officers.

On the ambassadorial level, we have just six assigned black ambassadors -- all men. That's drop from 14 black men and women serving under the Carter Administration.

While affirmative action programs have increased black participation in the junior and mid-level ranks, those programs appear to

participation in U.S. policy, and all Americans, because the image of America depends on using its great strength of diversity to the fullest.

Corrective action needs to be taken immediately. The Secretary of State should make affirmative action programs a top departmental priority and become personally involved in them. That's how corporations with successful affirmative action programs work -- by their

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have been de-emphasized in recent years and many blacks leave the Department after a few years.

One reason they leave could be that they see how their talented seniors are treated. When black senior diplomats are rotated back to the U.S. after their tour of duty they appear more likely to be shunted aside while their white peers get increased responsibilities and are prepared for more important foreign postings. The perception of blocked career ladders is demoralizing, and the frantic search for an acceptable person to send to South Africa can only have added to the demoralization.

The negative experiences of blacks in this Administration's conduct of its foreign policy discourages talented candidates from seeking careers in the foreign service. That could mean that we'll face the same situation of black underrepresentation in senior State Department ranks twenty years out -- when today's entrants to the system will be assuming posts of considerable importance.

That hurts black Americans, because it reduces our already limited

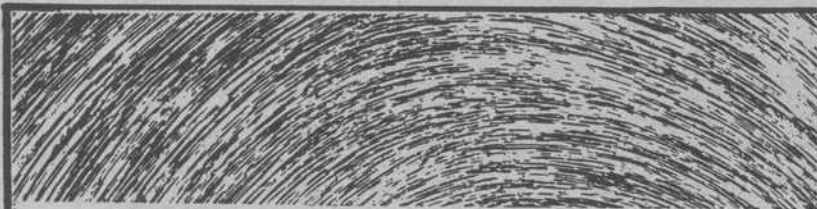
CEO's personal involvement and commitment.

Closer links should also be established with the black colleges that are potential recruiting grounds for tomorrow's ambassadors. And with two out of five of our ambassadors drawn from political appointees, consideration should be given to appointing prominent blacks as ambassadors. They would serve their country well and serve as role models for young people.

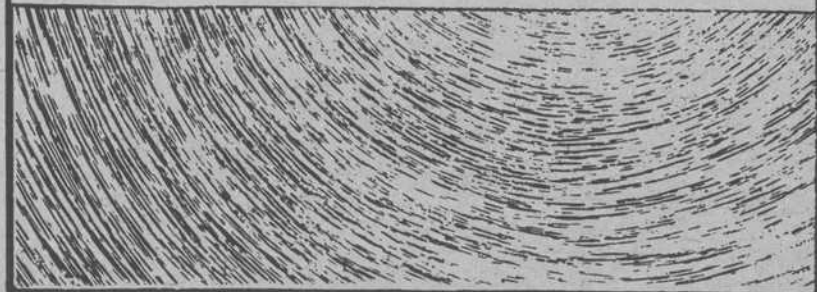
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## Words of Marcus Garvey By Kofi Tyus



"The man or woman who has no confidence in self is an unfortunate being, and is really a misfit in creation."



questions about U.S. policy development and about the absence of blacks from our diplomatic corps.

It's not enough to have a black ambassador to Pretoria. We also need blacks helping to frame the U.S. global policies our ambassadors carry out. The exclusion of blacks from senior policy-making levels at the State Department and the White House may result in policies that are often seen as insensitive to the world's non-white nations.

And the process that led to Ambassador Perkins' appointment was embarrassing. The Administration's refusal to implement an effective South Africa policy, including sanctions, led it, for public relations reasons, to want a black to represent us in Pretoria.

But the long search for a candidate just focused attention on the historic exclusion of blacks from the diplomatic service.

Although the State Department has had affirmative action programs of varying degrees since the mid-1970s, the results are not seen where they count -- at the top. There are only about a dozen blacks among the 650 senior posts in the

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