

Department of Commerce Man-

Highest Placed Black Overcomes His Difficulties

Overcoming one's fears might not be the master key to opening the door of success and personal satisfaction, but you'd have a hard time convincing Leonard Robert Jackson otherwise.

And he should know. Jackson is chief of the Census Bureau's Foreign Trade Division and the highest placed black in the Bureau which is part of the U. S. Department of Commerce's Social and Economic Statistics Administration.

He started his career in government service as a Grade 3 clerk in the division he now heads. As promotions came to him and his responsibilities grew, Jackson began attending staff meetings and strategy sessions.

"I tried to avoid those meetings whenever I could," Jackson recalls. "I froze during them and became tongue-tied, simply petrified." Remembering how he overcame a hangup as a youth helped him conquer this one.

As a teenager, Jackson said he had an almost abnormal fear — and fascination — of airplanes. One day he forced himself to take a place ride over his native Pittsburgh area. "I figured that if so many other people could do it, I'd fight back my fears and try it, too." He enjoyed the flight and tried it again.

In fact, Jackson liked flying so well he joined the Air Corps during World War II and wound up training as a flight instructor to teach, of all things, aerobatics.

Jackson knew he had really

licked any lingering doubts of himself about 15 years ago, when he crashed a rented light plane into the banks of Chesapeake Bay during a severe thunderstorm. "On the next bright day, I went up again," he said. He still holds a private pilot's license.

Today, Jackson heads a division that operates one of the largest statistical programs in the Federal Government. It annually handles, among other things, the records of millions of export and import transactions. The division has about 200 employees.

Jackson studied statistics and economics at American University and at the U. S. Department of Agriculture Graduate School. Prior to his present assignment — he has been division chief two years — he was the assistant division chief for research and methodology.

Being black, he says, has been no real obstacle in a field in which few members of his race are involved. "I find that the people I deal with generally respect you for what you're doing, not what you are," Jackson says.


Last October, he was presented the Department of Commerce's Gold Medal — its highest award — for his contributions to "government and industry through his leadership in the exploration, development, implementation and administration" in the methods in which foreign trade activity is reported.

His philosophy is simple. "Set high standards for yourself, and do what you can to maintain them. Analyze your weak points and strengthen them."

Jackson owns and lives on a 71-acre farm in Lothian, Maryland with his wife, Betty, and their three children.

His interests range far beyond the world of trade and statistics. He and his wife raise Kentucky blue grass sod for commercial sale.

"Betty handles about 95 per cent of the business and, frankly, I'm ready to turn over the other five per cent to her," Jackson grins. "Then I can play a little golf."



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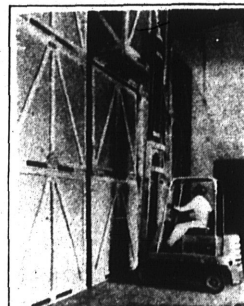
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Center for Disease Control at HEW

The Center for Disease Control, U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, has awarded the State of Alaska \$44,900 to intensify its campaign against the venereal disease epidemic, according to Frederick McGinnis, Commissioner of Health and Social Services.

The new grant will be used to support more public education about venereal disease and screening programs to find women who may not be aware that they have venereal disease.

Training programs for public

health nurses and laboratory personnel will be utilized to identify and treat persons who are spreading venereal disease.

At present, the reported cases of venereal disease in Alaska represent nearly 1 per cent of the State's population.

It has been recommended that widespread education, case finding and treatment programs be undertaken through government, schools, and organized medicine to combat this rising nation-wide epidemic.

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