And good riddance, affirmative action?

Ward Connerly, according to an article in *Newsweek* magazine earlier this year, doesn't want to be defined as an affirmative action businessman, despite the fact that the black Californian half-owns a land-use consulting company.

"I want to be judged by the quality of my work," he told *Newsweek*.

An admirable attitude, to be sure. But, unfortunately, racial bigotry still exists in certain pockets of this country. And that's what has helped affirmative action proliferate for the last quarter-century.

The state of California will put the issue to a vote next year: Is it good and acceptable. Frankly, there's nothing wrong with this approach; it's simply a smart businessman doing some creative thinking—and a lot of people are doing it.

It's no secret, then, that our government has overcompensated. Its policies, as one pundit notes, "in the name of equality, leapfrog the less qualified over the better qualified."

Almost universally—even among minorities like Connerly—affirmative action is seen as wrong:

"So long as we continue to count by race, ethnicity and gender, and to distribute benefits and preferences accordingly, civil rights will be a hollow and corrupt substitute for equal opportunity." (Linda Chavez, writing in *Forbes* magazine)

"Many minorities and females have no definitive way to know whether, or to what extent, they got where they are by their own efforts. By and large, group quotas stigmatize even legitimate achievements." (Dr. Thomas Sowell, a black, writing in *Forbes*)

That government is now taking a closer look at affirmative action is a step in the right direction. Only time will tell, however, whether our elected political leaders have the social wisdom to—at the very least—amend the tenets of affirmative action.

As black jazz pianist Duke Ellington once said, all he ever wanted was the chance to command, rather than demand, respect. Would that it were so.