

# The Black Thing

## Can You See It Any Other Way?

by JEFFREY ROTH

The Afro-American Organization of the University of Hartford put forth 19 PROPOSALS to the administration on March 27, 1969. The only DEMANDS they made were to have these proposals answered on April 8, 1969. Fortunately for the administration, this demand, made by a substantial portion of the student body, was forestalled. We hope the Administration does not intend to ignore it. To disregard a movement is to frustrate it. Frustration results in either: 1) Rigidity or narrowness of outlook, or 2) Aggression. The Administration is not progressing in the right direction.

In order to understand the Organization's proposals, we must liberate our processed white minds, and try to understand the nature of blackness. Ever since Thomas Jefferson and his fellow racists (The First Constitutional Congress) declared that all people are created equal, we have been forced to believe it. Fortunately this is not true.

People are different and should be APPRECIATED for their differences. The best thing for today's black man is to be integrated into our beautiful, just, white society, right? BULLSHIT. The Afro-American, as past peoples have done, deserves to be integrated WITH our white society. This implies giving as well as taking. This also implies retaining a distinct cultural identity within the larger society.

Our white minds have been perverted by mass media and white propaganda. Our racist society (Presidential civil disorder report) had dehumanized the Negro to a point where we think him incapable of having his own culture. "A History of the American People Vol. II -- since 1865," the text currently in use at this University for AMERICAN HISTORY AFTER THE CIVIL WAR is a good example of covert racism through exclusion. The text is the third edition (1967), originally published in 1952 and authored by Carman, Syrett, and Wisby. This book allots four pages out of 850 to "The Negro and His Rights." Within these four pages Adam Clayton Powell Jr. and Martin Luther King Jr. each have one sentence. C.O.R.E., the N.A.A.C.P., and S.N.C.C. are not even mentioned in the four pages. All civil rights legislation is attributed to "The

Administrative efforts of President Eisenhower" or to the "Supreme Court decisions written by Chief Justice Earl Warren." No attempt is made to credit the Negro organizations, organizers, and demonstrators who fought hard, long, and peaceably for their rights. No attempt is made to shatter the image of the "lazy nigger" who wants everything but refuses to work for it.

Before you Westchester weekend hippies and staid Frat boys go flying off on your well rehearsed liberal trips, you should try to understand the nature of blackness. Our white society has forcibly implanted many unwanted traits into black culture. Poor housing and a high crime rate are as much a part of black culture as Ray Charles and Aretha Franklin. Shouldn't a black student from the ghetto be judged by people familiar with the ghetto? Can an administrator from West Hartford determine the values of a student from Bellevue Square?

How can the white segment of this University be exposed to black culture without hiring black artists, writers, musicians, and painters to live in residence? And how can this be accomplished without allotting the Afro-American Organization the proposed \$15,000 annual budget? Can this institu-

tion meet the needs of the community if the percentage of matriculating students does not reflect the ethnic percentage of the community? Can the Board of Regents be responsive to the University unless it too reflects this ethnic percentage? Is it unreasonable for black students, constantly disregarded, constantly bombarded by mass media with white culture, to want to live together in a dormitory named after a black hero? The Afro-American proposals are surely not unrealistic when viewed in the proper perspective.

The need for a Black Studies program is surely self-evident. It should be made mandatory for all WHITE students. The awarding of a degree in Black Studies is a necessity, but must uphold the standards of the University. A degree in Black Studies would be priceless to a student preparing for teaching in an urban school. To complement the Black Studies Department, a black library is needed. This does NOT mean a separate building only for blacks. It means a collection of books by black authors in a certain section of the existing library.

The proposals of the Afro-American Organization, if passed with our help, will not only produce important social changes, but may pave the way for further educational reform.

## The List of Proposals

To Whom It May Concern:

Whereas the Black students of this urban university find its curriculum irrelevant to the needs of Black students (and to those of Americans In General), we, the Afro-American Organization, propose, 1) namely, the instituting of a Black Studies Department offering a major degree, staffed and administered by Blacks who are acceptable to the Afro-American Organization.

Related proposals, yet of no less importance, are the following:

- 2) That the percentage of matriculated students reflect the black ethnic percentage of Hartford.
- 3) That no black students be expelled, suspended, or academically dismissed without the judgment of his peer group.
- 4) That a \$15,000 budget for the Afro-American Organization be annually allotted.
- 5) That a dormitory complex be named after black heroes, with the understanding that black students have priority in choosing their living accommodations in these dormitories.
- 6) The hiring of black security guards employed in cooperation with the Afro-American Organization.
- 7) That a black newspaper be instituted for the benefit of the university and the community.
- 8) The establishment of a black library.
- 9) The creation of a special emergency loan fund for black students.
- 10) The inauguration of community educational programs such as, but more meaningful than, the extent "New Careers Program" which brings persons from the black community into school to train them for para-professional jobs.
- 11) That scholarships be awarded to black athletes.
- 12) That fellowships be awarded to black students in the graduate school.
- 13) The formation of satellite schools in the black community to teach prospective educators of the nature of blackness.
- 14) That black artists, i.e. black writers, musicians, painters, etc., be hired to live in residence -- chosen by the Afro-American Organization.
- 15) That incoming blacks be oriented under the auspices of the Afro-American Organization during Orientation Week.
- 16) That one third of the total WUOH air time be allocated to blacks.
- 17) That the number of blacks on the Board of Regents reflect the respective percentage of blacks in Hartford.
- 18) The universal observance of black holidays.

To avoid any ambiguities or forestallments on the part of the administration the Afro-American Organization demands that the aforementioned proposals be answered on April 8, 8 o'clock, p.m., AT the MARTIN LUTHER KING MEMORIAL PROGRAM.

19) That the present policy of segregating the University Community and the Hartford Community be abolished.

## King Thing Diplomacy or the Case for A Black Cu

by ANGELO LEWIS

It started with a newspaper article...Making a satire of blackness...putting our head (black heads) in strange places...Fields of mood & righteous indignation...The problem being how to act...Say the black community is uptight...You have made jokes...of our blackness...too long...You have responded...in a most peculiar manner...Judeo-Christian ethic with a perverse twist...

Emotion is the catalyst for action...Images of Shley & Lewis & Dixon & Hughes arguing over tactics... & does confrontation mean eradication...or how uptight will whitey get...if we seize his buildings & burn his papers...

So let us have a ritual burning... Let us open their eyes & cleanse their minds... Show them what community awareness is all about... Show them that we're prepared to act... Expressions... of what we

want... of what we need... of what we MUST HAVE... to make our education relevant... to ourselves as black people... toward destroying the myth of a western world... To give some sense of perspective to

students in general...

And yes they said... We'd love to see you destroy Jack Hardy... give you an S.F.A. meeting & everything... (nigger)... thinking we want to rid the community of white

radicals... thinking we'll do their dirty work for them...

So we'll make the Campus Center a platform for expression... Show mister white power what our revolution is all about... That nigger dancing in the shadows is real, man... you can't dismiss him... & he'd rather eat watermelon then kiss your ass...

But the nature of our revolution is all very plain & simple... Making the university more relevant... to us & to you... & to the black community which this university depends on... for its workers... & for its tools... Give us... a Black Studies Department... Put our culture on a blackboard for all to see... Blacks & whites together... Cultural cross-sectional integration... So you can see what thoughts our minds are made of... & why once you're black... you can never go back...

The institution of western waspian culture has done its thing... Programming masses of black & white people into a web of rah-rah raise-the-flag nationalistic racism... Changing black people to negroes... Robbing the people of their culture & then saying come on over nigger & follow me... & saying

But we are tired... of these insults... We are claiming... our inherent majesty... Power... to the people... all of the people... Give... the people up... unto themselves... Black Studies for Western minds... explaining to America the roots of our culture... before dialog between the races is inconceivable... & the streets... are paved... with

blood... In other words... integration is a two way street... come & dance to our music... our wisdom... we have no wish... to be white...

In order for black studies to be effective... it must be staffed & administered by blacks... How can a white person teach us of Africa... or even of James Brown? ... We must have... more black students... You (the University of Hartford) are using the community for your own ends... As an urban university, you have an urban responsibility... to the people of Hartford... of which 30% are black... you must give black people a higher academic student percentage... You must share your wealth with the black community... Sending your white teachers... into our communities... to teach... & to learn...

We must educate ourselves... We must educate the whites... Give us a black newspaper... Give us a black library... Let the seeds of thought be planted... & planted amidst the people... Give us a place (library)... where blacks can learn about themselves & whites can learn about blackness... Give us a relevant budget... At least (dig it AT LEAST) \$15,000... (Images of hassles with the university... not enough money for The Believers... not enough money for Bobby Seale... Elliot Dixon taking a wage reduction... & the list goes on...)

Give us a Black dormitory... where blacks can live & bring people... Preference to black students... Not segregation.



From left: Elliot Dixon, Paul Britto, Sam Schley, and Angelo Lewis

(Jeffrey Roth)