

ON THE OTHER HAND

By LOUISE P. DUMETZ
NEGRO PRESS INTERNATIONAL

"BLACK IS a proud color. The white man has messed over the black man for 400 years. Our people have had the patience of saints. It's time for us to start being proud of our color."

Tall, clean-cut, voluble and decisive, the polite well-mannered youngster was obviously talking about his favorite subject. He said he considered it his personal responsibility to build pride in the heritage of the Negro.

Another youth of similar stance, also in his teens, completed the Damon and Pythias combination. Both were high school juniors, and both were attired in beautiful ankle length robes which resembled those worn by native Africans. A matching cap added to the ceremonial look. They said they had worn the robes to school "several times" to inspire pride in their fellow students.

"We'll wear them Sunday. We're going to help honor the birthday anniversary of Malcolm X."

The ideologies began to be confusing. BUT SINCE the Negro mixture of races is as varied as any kaleidoscope, it should not be surprising that these fair-skinned youngsters choose to wear African robes to identify their heritage--while they pay tribute to a man whose philosophy was as changing, as the Negro mixing pot origin is varied.

The two chose not to discuss the religious aspect of Malcolm X. A button established their allegiance. It announced, "Freedom by any means necessary. Our Black Shining Prince Malcolm X."

Interspersed in the conversation of the talkative lads were such statements as "We believe you should be peaceful and passive. You should obey the law. But if someone puts his hands on you, send him to the cemetery," and "No, we're not non-violent. Only a Tom is non-violent."

Smouldering resentment for the racial humiliation black people have endured, erupted forcibly when the boys were told, "You've got as much right to claim England or France or Ireland as your homeland as you have Africa. You know Negroes, by definition are not Africans. They are a mixture of the white race and the black race."

The two lads nearly exploded. "I can't be proud of someone who has kept his foot on my neck for 400 years."

"I'm ashamed of my white blood. I'm proud of my African heritage."

A pin they wore established this. It said, "A race without knowledge of its history is like a tree without roots."

Two clasping hands stretched from the United States to Africa.

"People all over the world know the white man is dying out. Negroes ought to open their eyes and see that the white race is through. The coming world belongs to the black man."

THEY EXPLAINED that they were in the process of organizing. Their group of Black Nationalists was not affiliated with any existing sect. They don't have a sponsor as yet. They were going to call themselves "The Mau Maus."

"We've got a lot of guys who meet with us on weekends. I don't know just how many. We read books and discuss things. We read about Negro and African history."

It is good that they read, and study, and are proud. But another aspect does not seem as complimentary.

There were, according to police reports, about 250 of them in Washington Park for the Malcolm X birthday anniversary celebration. When several were arrested following a disturbance, the crowd followed the police to the nearby station where they hurled abuse, rocks, bottles, and Molotov cocktails. More than one paper called the incident a riot.

THE BEAUTIFUL robes--worn to make the black man proud of his African origin can't inspire much pride when they are worn by black men hurling bottles at black men in a black police station.

Anger and hate breed violence. The "Mau Maus" should carefully examine their objectives. Surely that Sunday's embarrassing episode was not a planned demonstration. If so, were they demonstrating for dignity? Pride? Housing? Jobs? Schools? What?

And surely Molotov cocktails thrown at a police station are not their accepted modus operandi. There are problems and there are solutions to problems. Are the Black Nationalists a workable solution?

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(REPORT, from page 1)

this purpose. If we had any other purpose, we could not have survived our first four rough years.

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The VOICE pledges its total facilities, its total purpose, as well as its total personnel to the cause of its readers.

AIR FORCE NAMES NEGRO ASTRONAUT

CHICAGO - (NPI)--Outer space, previously for whites only, is expected to be integrated, with the appointment of the first Negro astronaut.

He is Major Robert H. Lawrence, 30, a Chicagoan, now stationed at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif. He was among four military spacemen named by the Air Force.

Major Lawrence has been participating for the past year in the Aerospace Research Pilot Training program, a select school at the California base. He is known to want to become an astronaut.

The Air Force plans to send its first spaceman aloft in 1970 aboard a Manned Orbiting Laboratory (MOL). Maj. Lawrence could be one of the men aboard the craft. The military man who was just promoted on June 20--is expected to graduate from the training program July 25. He reportedly has met the training program's "stringent eligibility requirements" including piloting ability and educational achievement.

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