

BLACK'S CAN AND MUST ORGANIZE THEIR COMMUNITY

By Paul C. Smith

Consent Decree

The November meeting on the Consent Decree progress was held last week in the Sahara Hotel.

While the overall progress is an improvement, the overall compliance is disappointing, in that the goals in some classifications are so far from being met - it appears that the Decree is held very light. As a matter of fact, some signers are making a mockery of the Order.

Various reports indicate just how lightly compliance is held: Local 720, the stagehand Union was reported by Bill Campbells secretary as being in compliance. Meaning, they have trained 30 Blacks - However, it appears that only 5 Blacks have regular jobs and 2 work part time. Of special note is that fact that there are 20 job classifications.

The trainee's were given training in only 2 classifications. The report would also have us believe that the number working 7, is 12-1/2 percent of the total number of stagehands employed. After 2-1/2 years into the Decree, a proposed training class for Security Guards has been announced. Why did it take so long to start a class?

The evasive way reports are made is another area of concern. We are told that the Castaways, Circus Circus, Frontier, Landmark, and the Silver Slipper have reached their Dealer quota, and that all hotels have reached their quota's of Keno writers.

However, no one gives a simple report - like we employ X number of people in each classification and X number are Black!

The Hughes hotels appear to be leading the way in compliance, having reached its quota in more classifications than some of the other hotels.

INCOME OF BLACK AMERICANS IN 1972 WAS 51 BILLION DOLLARS, SAID DR. ANDREWS BRIMMER, BLACK MEMBER OF FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD.

\$51,000,000,000,00
INCOME OF BLACK AMERICA 1972

BLACKS RETICENCE TO SEIZE THE INITIATIVE TO ORGANIZE THEIR OWN COMMUNITIES IS A MAJOR FACTOR AND IMPORTANT FACTOR CONTRIBUTING TO OUR COMMUNITIES UNDER-DEVELOPMENT..

DOUGLAS C. GLASGOW, DEAN OF HOWARD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK.



THE DECLINE OF BLACK STUDIES

There is increasing evidence that black studies courses, once promoted as the solution to the psychological and educational problems of Negro students, are becoming obsolete in the few short years of their existence. Courses on black culture and black history, which filled university classrooms several years ago, now attract a handful of students. The more frivolous offerings have succumbed altogether, victims of their innate irrelevance.

At Howard University, for example, 38 students are majoring in Afro-American studies; two years ago over 1,600 students signed up for courses in the department. Predominantly white George Washington University saw enrollment in a black history course dwindle from 167 students in 1969, the first year it was offered, to a mere 24 students this fall.

The impulse of many is to explain this phenomenon in terms of rising student apathy--a de-politicization that has infected campus life in the aftermath of riots and building take-overs. There may be some merit to this argument; certainly it helps explain the lack of interest of white students.

But it does not answer the question of why black students, who are entering college in increasingly large numbers, reject black studies for traditional curriculum.

To understand why this is taking place, it is first necessary to recognize the overriding implications of black studies. To those who initially demanded, at times violently, that universities institute autonomous departments of Afro-American history and culture, their actions appeared as a genuinely revolutionary gesture which would accelerate the process of racial pride and racial solidarity. And yet, in reality, they were laying the groundwork for educational vehicles that, far from instilling racial pride, have perpetuated the myth of racial inferiority.

The philosophy which underlies black studies, as well as black-English, and quotas, is that without special treatment black people cannot make it in the real world. And this is simply

nonsense.

In spelling out his objections to racial quotas, Thomas Sowell suggests the magnitude of the psychological damage that results from the translation of these myths into social and educational policy. "What all the arguments for quotas are saying," declares Sowell, "is that black people just don't have it, and that they will have to be given something in order to have something." He adds that the commitment and abilities of competent black people "will be completely undermined, as black becomes synonymous--in the minds of black and white alike--with incompetence, and black achievement becomes synonymous with charity or pay-offs."

There are, of course, quite pragmatic reasons why black studies courses are shunned. For once the student leaves the sheltered atmosphere of the campus, he discovers these courses have little value. Those who see education as a means through which they can obtain the skills to enable them to serve the cause of racial advancement look to medicine, law or science. And those who have a genuine scholarly interest in the role of black people in America recognize that they must study Negro history, not in isolation, but as part of American history.

I want to make it clear that while I believe black studies to be without real educational merit, I recognize that the demands which led to their establishment were a legitimate reaction to the racism of the educational system. The contribution of Negroes to our history and culture was neglected or distorted; the racial stereotypes which had such devastating psychological effects on black and white alike were reinforced.

It is also true that gifted Negro scholars, teachers of the highest abilities, were passed over by the most prestigious universities until the clamor for black studies. Insofar as black studies forced the educational establishment to recognize their talents, it performed a service.

Those of us who raised objections about black studies (and were very often denounced as

"Uncle Toms" because of it) did so for one reason; they did not want to see another generation of mis-educated blacks. The easiest thing in the world is for colleges to create a separate set of courses for black students, while ignoring the very real problems created by ghetto poverty and inferior schools. The challenge is to provide compensatory programs that can help students overcome their deficiencies, rather than pretend they don't exist.

The institution of education did not escape the racism which pervaded American society for 300 years. The reforms which followed in the wake of the civil rights movement represent important, and often quite successful, efforts to achieve the equality of opportunity. The enrollment of black students has increased dramatically, and black scholars are now offered the positions which for years were denied them. But the reform impulse has been impeded by succumbing to the cult of the "new," by the acceptance of instant solutions, and by taking the repudiation of black studies courses, are already discovering this; it is time that the universities learned this lesson as well.

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