



*Association
of
Black Collegians
Lafayette College
Easton, Pa
[1969?]*

1.

REMEMBER:

BROTHER MALCOLM X

BORN: May 19, 1925

ASSASSINATED: Feb. 21, 1965

LAFAYETTE COLLEGE
LIBRARY
EASTON, PA.

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"Black Voice" was conceived by several members of the Black Culture Committee of the Association of Black Collegians here at Lafayette. In our first issue we hope to get to know our own brothers by presenting some of their opinions. If this newsletter proves successful we intend to spread its circulation to all of the brothers and sisters in colleges in the Lehigh Valley. It is our purpose to help bring together all black collegiates in the valley.

Returning from future ideas to the present, this newsletter was written and compiled by five brothers. Thus, its future success depends on contributions from other schools--be it general news, social events, essays and poetry.

Please send any contributions to:

Association of Black Collegians
Lafayette College
Box 492
Easton, Pennsylvania 18042

(Contributions must be in during the first week of every school month)

Due to a clerical error, the name of brother Russell Robinson was deleted from the Directory of Black College Students in the Lehigh Valley.

BLACK STUDENTS AT LAFAYETTE

by

James Hairston

Here at Lafayette College we, the black student population, have finally awakened to the fact that our existence here is ridiculous. The integrationist attitude of the early sixties which abounds in the administration of the College is something we are unable to accept. The majority of us attend this College on scholastic aid. This is supposedly the only difference between us and Lafayette's white vanguard, but it is hopelessly untrue. We come from different backgrounds; different types of schools and grounds; and different home environments both economically and socially. Our parents are black. There is little similarity between us and the white student.

In the past we have attempted to overlook our precarious situation at this institution of higher learning. This alternative to feeling out of place was almost silently suggested to us by the whites with whom we have personal contact. Now, we have realized that we must be black here on the campus and not just at home. The problems of our people in the ghettos or wherever they live are still ours even though we are to a great extent shielded from them on this hill.

It is obvious from evidence throughout the country; that unity and solidarity are necessary for the survival of black people. The same formula is necessary immediately here at Lafayette College. If we black students are to exert ourselves in any manner, we must take meaningful bearings of the situation here and then unite to give a common voice to our grievances and make our presence felt.

The white student body and faculty as a whole are almost totally unreceptive to the black student. We, the blacks, have become weary of this deafness and blindness and are moving to a new position where we won't have to wait for these begrudged responses. We, tired of being "colored" students, have realized that we can not become "plain students" as the mood of the early sixties proposed and are moving to consolidate our position as "black students".

Often questions arise about the new black unity, about black power, and about black militancy growing among the black students. It can all be explained in simple terms. White people have not wanted us, have overlooked us, and would be rid of us if possible. Now we have realized that we want ourselves. We feel it is necessary to view the world through our eyes, not those of the white man.

Here at Lafayette College, the brothers are deprived of

adequate social life and of the black cultural experience they would normally have access to in their own communities. We are asked to change into "white niggers" so that we may live and learn with some semblance of peace of mind. If we do not make this shocking metamorphosis we are made to feel different. Now we have united and are attempting to give each other those things of our blackness that are absent on this campus.

MORE

by

Gerald Gill

More Black studies, more Black faculty members, and increased recruitment of Black students are the familiar cries heard at many predominantly white institutions today. Just today Duke University in response to Black students' demands announced the creation of a Black studies department.

But whereas a "Cultural Revolution" is taking place all across the country in terms of Black studies programs, an evolution continues here at Lafayette. Yale University now offers an undergraduate major in Afro-American studies which offers specialization in History, Economics, or Political Science. Three weeks ago a Harvard University faculty report urged the establishment of a degree in Afro-American studies which would initially be run as a combining major with a existing major. But at Lafayette, just one course per semester in Black Civilization is offered. Anyone taking American Civilization 66 will tell you that in a semester we have to cover a great deal. In fact we will only be spending three meetings on the literary achievements of the Black man whereas Yale already has a course entitled Black Literature. An argument against creating a separate Black Literature course is that black writers are already incorporated into existing English courses. Only the works of selected black authors such as Ralph Ellison and Richard Wright are being read. Why not read more works by contemporaries like, Leroy Jones, James Baldwin, Claude Brown and Lorraine Hansberry?

Look around, there are no black faculty members or full-time administrators. In the February 5, 1969 edition of the Easton Express it was mentioned that "Negro historian Joseph Lodgeson has been appointed to teach two courses next year at Lehigh." If Lehigh University, a predominantly engineering school, can hire a black historian, why can't Lafayette? Surely discrimination in housing can be no better in Bethlehem as it is in Easton. Recently, Northampton County Area Community College announced the hiring of a black administrator. These two colleges in the Lehigh Valley have already taken positive first steps. What will Lafayette do?

Look around once again. There are 38 blacks on campus, more than at any other institution in the Lehigh Valley. Should Lafayette be proud in having such a scant number? No. Last year Lafayette College accepted 29 blacks but only 9 came. What happened to the other twenty? Could it be as a spokesman from Dartmouth College has said, "We are all fishing in the same pool, and the boys can only go to one college."

Since Lafayette wants to be classified as "one of the finest, small all-male colleges in the United States", it appears we shall have to continue to fish in the same pool and continue to come home with such a small catch. Yet, there is a glimmer of hope. Several of the black students here are engaged in writing letters to applicants in which we try to answer the many questions in their minds which the College catalogue cannot truthfully answer. As one who has written several letters, I find this approach to be a failure. Rather, what is needed is more direct contact by both telephone and preferably personal visits. In the latest issue of the Lafayette Alumnus it was mentioned that the Admissions Office would be visiting certain "ghetto" schools in metropolitan areas, including New York City, Washington, D.C., and Atlanta. Would it not be asking too much if the Admissions Office took several of the black students here with them particularly to New York and Washington since they aren't so far away. Since we are Black we could more easily explain to another brother the experiences of Black students at a white all-male college. To a college that has long prided itself in having a black member in its first graduating class in 1832, we're not asking too much.

AT-HOME

by

Gerald Gill

"A Negro student should feel very much "at home" on the Lafayette campus." At least, reads the referral sheet printed by the National Scholarship Service and Fund for Negro students, the organization responsible for the presence here of most of the brothers. But do we really feel "at home"? To answer this question I thought about my college experience and remembered some of my feelings.

"At home" is knowing that Stokely Carmichael almost had to speak in Marquis Hall, the freshman dining hall, because the gym was scheduled for intramural wrestling that night.

"At home" is seeing one of the nominees for the George Wharton Pepper Prize, given annually to the senior who most represents Lafayette's ideals, taking a nap during last spring's All-College Convocation: The City: Chaos or Order.

"At home" is hearing people all around you at a home basketball game calling a brother "Gorilla".

"At home" is seeing only, much less talking to, thirty sisters during your entire freshman year".

"At home" is having no more than four dates, if that, a semester."

"At home" is being here nearly every weekend because you don't have a car."

"At home" is knowing that seven brothers stayed here during the last Thanksgiving vacation and only 1 of us was invited to Thanksgiving Day dinner at a faculty or administration members' home."

"At home" is knowing that an open door exists in the Dean's Office on Monday--Wednesday, 4 to 6 p.m. and Saturday, 9 to 12 a.m."

"At home" is hearing Martha and The Vandellas referred to as a second class group."

WORDS ON UNITY

The reason Blacks are failing today is because they try to gather from everybody except themselves.

I reject individualism for I am all Black men. I am Joe the sharecropper, John the janitor, and Mose the miner. When they catch hell, I catch hell!

Maulana Ron Karenga

Titles (Pandemonium and Chaos)

Confusion, confusion, confusion.
White religion, white money.

No pimps, no whores, no militants,
No pacifists, no Toms, no Miss Annes,
No, no, no, no, no, no;
No supervisors, no leaders, no turnkeys.
Titles--titles--to confuse.
Titles to bring on suspicions.
Titles entitled by honkey--Pandemonium.

We must remember that a Nationalist is a brother.
whore is a sister.
militant is a brother
Tom is a brother.
nigger is a brother.
preacher is a brother.
pacifist is a brother.
plumber is a brother.
doctor is a brother.
lawyer is a brother.
bricklayer is a brother.
faggot is a sister.
bulldagger is a brother.

Now all blacks, all at once,
Drop your titles--drop your titles--
On the honkey's skull.
Cause the title is against the grain
Of black folks' unity.

The honkey think he can give you a title.
A title and \$30 a week and you happy.
Drop that title, man.
Drop that title.
No division--just one nation
Perpetuating Black Nationalism.

NO TITLES! NO TITLES! NO TITLES!
Just brothers and sisters.

Reggie Howze

(Reprinted from "Connection", Spring 68, published by the Afro-American Institute.)

Brothers and sisters, there is only one thing that stops us from overcoming our situation here in this racist pig sty, called the United States of America. That one problem is UNITY. If for just one single moment we could get ourselves totally together for just one single purpose, we would upset this white man's heaven to no end. Imagine the scene if all the black people in this country got together for nothing but to say "BOO!" to the Man. The pigs in the power structure would swear it was a communist plot. Those cats in the triple K would be so white with fright that they wouldn't need to run around in them sheets anymore. And those pigs in the ghettos would be running with their billy clubs between their legs, not knowing what's coming off. You can hear them now, sittin' up in their ivory towers, "What's the matter with them crazy niggers? They done lost their sense." Not hardly baby. They've found something; UNITY.

No more of that white christian brotherhood stuff; no more of that promised land jive; no more of that heaven in the hereafter crap while the white man has his heaven here now. Now is the time for BLACK BROTHERHOOD; BLACK UNITY. Now is the time for true BROTHERHOOD among brothers and sisters; BLACK BROTHERS AND BLACK SISTERS. Without UNITY, there is no POWER; without POWER, there is no HOPE; without HOPE, there is NOTHING!

POWER, THEN PEACE

Brother Larry Lennon

"The black community must work toward becoming a viable, power-wielding ethnic entity."

James Farmer

Brothers and Sisters to you, and we must all act accordingly. Treat everyone Black, the same way you would treat a Brother or Sister in your own family. Even members of our families, at times, do things that we don't like, but we love them just the same, and we try to make them see the light.

Sam (Howze)

Reprinted from "Connection", Spring 68, published by The Afro-American Institute.

There is no such thing as individualism, we are all Black. The only thing that saved us from being lynched like Emmett Till or shot down like Medgar Evers was not our money, education, or social status, but our absence.

Maulana Ron Karenga

We don't need anymore street corner philosophers. We don't need anymore individualists that contribute in their own way. Individualists had 450 years to get their own way together and it hasn't worked yet. It's about time we had a collective effort and moved on that.

Maulana Ron Karenga

It's Odd at Lafayette College

by

James Hairston

- that not until black unrest at campuses across the nation grew to great proportions did the College realize that it had black students.
- that no black students in recent years have been recruited from the Easton area.
- that no one was aware that black poets were read in some English courses until the College became afraid that students would scream that the black man wasn't studied here.
- that the College makes such an undirected fuss about discrimination in the fraternity system and only 42% of the black students are seriously interested.
- that Lehigh University, a predominantly engineering school, will have a black instructor before us.
- that Lafayette was one of the first institutions in the country to accept a black student, but in the class of 1972 there were only nine.
- just being a black.

three days of talking to let out a lifetime of denial

It is you
who feels the pain
of a burning supermarket
and cannot
hear the cries
of a hungry child

Yeah
the Mississippi
runs into the Mekong
get the boat at Harlem
sail red rivers
black seas
or walk
from cotton to rice
from cement to silt
Vietnam and Amsterdam
avenues of whitey's wars
Mekonsippi the 17th isn't parallel
doesn't
divide.

for we the fools
who want
a place to
piss in peace
can only find the valley

says a man
standing
in his black
with his together black
and in the flickering
fire red
white bled
black dead
night:
You
gave me the bottle
and taught me
to empty
its burning inside my body
I gave it back
stuffed
with the rags you made me wear
Kerosened
with my sweat
lit
with the match of your oppression
burning baby burning
I feel the fire
burn, baby burn
feeling froggy. got, got to leap.

Bourgeois

G.R.G.

He forgets about ghetto brothers
left behind
Only making more money
concerns his mind
So busy trying to enter
the system
He completely forgets all
about them:
So busy trying to
get rich quick
He forgets the Brother who
needs a fix
So busy trying to
acquire even more
He forgets Him society
made a wino

You can't forget them
You can't turn your back
In spite of your success
You, too, are Black.

today is past and what of it
 what the hell of it
 so it is gone
 i have tomorrow to live for
 shall i bask in history and antiquity
 for what purpose
 will i recover anything that was lost in yesterday
 today is of no use when it is gone
 now is the time to live for tomorrow is for dreamers
 is there time for dreaming
 hell
 time is wasted then when time is spent dreaming
 every moment carries with it the essence of a lifetime
 live fool live
 life is reality and reality is now
 wait for tomorrow and tomorrow will be gone
 yesterday is gone
 today is here and now it is gone
 what the hell of it
 live fool live
 live now

This day brings forth nothing and nothing shall I reap
Yesterday there was no harvest nor a grain of hope
Tomorrow is bleak but yet remains a ray of promise
Where do I turn for I am but a raisin in the grass
Do I stubbornly accept my fate of mediocrity
Am I doomed to oblivion
Shall I forever wander seeking my destiny
Is my destiny lurking on the far side of the horizon
Does it spell success and happiness for me
How do I get there--which road do I take
Where do I turn for I am but a raisin in the grass
Or is my destiny facing me head on
A sight of ugliness and despair and hopelessness
Empty dreams and busted dreams
Where do I turn for I am but a raisin in the grass

January 4-5, 1969

Gerald Coleman

"Uncle Tom's Alive and Still Kickin'"

Brother Larry Lennon

The spirit of Uncle Tom just refuses to die. He's still around to make sure that his own brothers do not get their just due. Recently, Brother Roy Wilkins has attacked black students who attempt to achieve the legitimate aspirations of black people. Brother Roy implies that he knows what's good for black folk, and he has proven he knows what to say to white folk so that their contributions keep coming into the N.A.A.C.P. Who is he really trying to jive. Wilkins has denounced autonomous black study programs and departments, and separate dormitories for black students as segregation all over again. He sounds like he really believes it, too. Even the Man believes it, but he has an excuse; he's the one who has to ease his conscience. What's brother Roy's excuse? We all know that segregation was forced upon us whether we wanted it or not. Black separatism, as Mr. Wilkins refer to it, is in no way similar to segregation. (An article on what Black Separatism really is will be published at a later date.) This so-called black separatism is by choice in all spheres and by necessity in most of them. It involves being and thinking black as opposed to white; for to think white is to think anti-black, in accordance with that great white American tradition. Black people must have an awareness and knowledge of themselves. We can never be allowed to think for one moment that we can assimilate ourselves into the mainstream of this country as long as racism exists here. Although some may whitewash their mind of this reality, they can never whitewash their skin and that is the illogical barrier blocking the black man from full assimilation into the mainstream of this racist society.

Brother Warner B. Wims, President of the Black Caucus at Union Theological Seminary, says that Wilkins' attacks on the black students "indicates his lack of faith in the black man's ability and his erroneous presupposition that separation and discrimination are inherently evil." Wims also said in his letter to the New York Times that "those universities with certain departments and facilities reinforce the black students' determination to get a significant education."

Tom Wicker, in an editorial on "Black Studies and Black Students" in the New York Times, says, "A black studies program will be fully useful only if it has, in addition to its educational purposes, the broadly social function of helping black students toward what Hamilton (Charles V.) has called "a firm base of self-awareness and identity"; and that can hardly be achieved unless the black students believe in the program and its relevance to their lives. That is why black students not only need, but are going to have to be given, a stronger voice in the Harvard program and those that other schools may be planning, than students normally ask for or get." (Lafayette, take heed.)

When the University of Detroit turned over to 45 black students an entire floor of a dormitory, Dean of Students, Frederick Shadrick said he approved of the agreement because "it is terribly important for black students to know that he has an opportunity to change his own destiny." Dean Shadrick added, "We have to realize there is a black community and a black culture. If we in the white community insist they do things our way it will only enhance the problem."

But Mr. Wilkins doesn't realize any of this. He has gone so far into his own bag as to say that N.A.A.C.P. legal resources might be used in an attempt to get a court ruling against the black students. Brother Roy Innis, national director of CORE, has said, "If Wilkins can use funds supposedly earmarked for black people to fight against those same people, then CORE will commit its resources to defend and safeguard the students in their demands."

It is true, as brother Roy Innis pointed out in a recent article, that Wilkins and the N.A.A.C.P. were forerunners in the Civil Rights movement but that is past history. That was but one battle of the war on racism entrenched in this country. It is time for new battles and new attacks. It is time for Brother Roy Wilkins to retire and pass the torch to those who are young, strong, and intelligent enough to carry it.

Unity, pride and identity are three words which have recently become a part of the Black man's vocabulary. Never before in our history have three such simple words carried such a powerful impact and message and meant so much to any one group of people. These words must remain the nucleus of our every thought and action as we fight and struggle in our movement for our very existence. I view the initiation of this newsletter, The Black Voice, as a vehicle through which we can unite our local collegiate brothers and sisters, giving them identity and pride in their blackness and culture.

Ultimately, however, the fifteen brothers, who feeling the emptiness of a life on our campus without unity and organized The Association of Black Collegians, must receive the highest commendations. For they are learning to work and deal with a system that was structured to exclude them. Their demands will be heard, their needs fulfilled and their wishes carried out. Fortunately they were germinated in a fertile environment. An environment where the bright warm rays of understanding have lifted the mist of doubt and suspicion which has shrouded our community for centuries.

As a group, however, you must grow in numbers, intent and understanding. You must leave the doors open for those white brothers and sisters who feel a need to be a part of your movement, for they too have, in many instances, come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Their backgrounds may have been void of "Blackness" and they now realize that they can not relate nor do they understand us as a group of people. They have been "whitewashed". Their consciences are being whipped by lies perpetuated by their fathers and grandfathers and when we see them offering their hands we must extend ours so that together we can bludgeon the evils of racism whenever and wherever it shows itself. I give full support to the Association in your many endeavors to fill the void in your present existence so that your college experience will be a more rewarding one. I am certain you have full support of the faculty and administration. Do not hesitate to use it. Ultimately, your experience at this or any other institution is going to be measured by your success and your failures; you will experience both. However, "be not weary in well doing for in due season you shall reap if you faint not".

David A. Portlock
Consultant to the
Dean of Students

"What contributions can white youth, especially students, who are disgusted with racism in this society, make to the black struggle for freedom?"

"whites who are sincere don't accomplish anything by joining Negro organizations and making them integrated. Whites who are sincere should organize among themselves and figure out some strategy to break down the prejudice that exists in white communities. This is where they can function more intelligently and more effectively, in the white community itself, and this has never been done."

Malcolm X