

The Association Of Black Collegians' Demands

(There has been some confusion over the demands of the Association of Black Collegians. Because of this, The Lafayette is printing the text of the manifesto in toto. —Ed.)

The Black Man in America has come to realize that for his survival he must maintain his black identity and move onto a path of self-determination. He has also realized that racism in this society has become more blatant and its manifestations more hostile. Lafayette College, a part of this society, has renounced its responsibility to humanity. The Black Man has been effectively excluded from the curriculum, the administration, the faculty, and, in a real sense, the student body. Therefore, it has become necessary for the black students of Lafayette College to take the initiative by offering positive alternatives and hope to America for its preservation. We, the Association of Black Collegians, recognize our responsibility and are forced of conscience to present these demands that will hopefully begin the end of this inhumanity. In order to clarify the goals and purposes of our demands, we hereby issue this manifesto.

1. More Black Students.

The Black Man must be able to take a more effective and influential part in the communities in which he resides. In order to accomplish this, he must be equipped with the skills, knowledge, and capacities necessary for him to survive in this society. For this reason, we demand that recruitment concentration be placed

upon urban areas, such as: New York City, Newark, Trenton, Philadelphia, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago and others. We demand that particular emphasis be placed on enrolling black students from so-called disadvantaged backgrounds. Lafayette College should also affiliate itself with the numerous programs and agencies that train and refer these black students to different colleges. In addition Lafayette College should seek out black students who reside in Easton and the Lehigh Valley.

In recognizing the deprived backgrounds of some students, compensatory and remedial programs need to be established to raise their academic level to a point where they could effectively participate and compete in the Lafayette academic environment. Lighter and more flexible course loads should be considered along with the freedom of finishing their undergraduate program in a time span that is more suitable to their needs. These students should be assigned sensitive and responsive advisors and counselors who would be able to aid them before and during their matriculation. We do not feel that any black student should be graduated from this institution if he or she has not received a full and relevant education and met the requirements for graduation from Lafayette College.

2. Black Studies Programs.

The racism and prejudice of this country has been built on sheer ignorance and perpetuated by one-

sided teaching of history, social sciences, literature, and all other areas of academic endeavor. A realistic education can correct much of this misrepresentation and omission of fact. We demand that Lafayette College take up its responsibility by providing a truly significant education. We demand the expansion of the present curriculum to include studies of the Black Man's experience in all aspects and areas in order that knowledge of the true Black Man might erase this insipid ignorance. Courses should be established to explore the African Heritage, the Black Man's literature, drama, poetry, history, music, art and the problems facing him in this racist environment. It is necessary that the Black Man take his proper place in history and exercise his proper role in the society. We further demand the revision of the entire curriculum of the college to eliminate the racism inherent in it. This applies in particular to the area of history. We no longer want to see Western Civilization presented as the only "civilization" in the modern world. There can no longer be the exclusion of four-fifths of the world's population because they are not white. In order to eliminate much of the racism in this country, the educational system must show that there is more to the world than the United States and Western Europe. Lafayette College must assume its responsibility by correcting its curriculum and creating a new white mentality.

3. More Black Faculty Members and Black Administrators.

In studying the past history of America, we as Black People have found that White America, on the whole, has denied our legitimate needs and aspirations. It must be realized that Black People know what they themselves need and want. What White America has given us in the past has not necessarily been for our benefit. For these reasons we demand that Lafayette College secure Black Faculty Members and Black Administrators on a full-time basis in order to effectively put these demands into operation and to make the Faculty and Administration more responsive to the needs of its black students. Exposure to black faculty members and black administrators would be a rewarding experience not just for black students but for administrators, faculty members, and the student

body as well. One of the immediate steps to be taken is the upgrading of the present black staff to full-time status. Lafayette College could also consider sponsoring its own black graduates through graduate school in return of them teaching here for a few years.

4. A Black House.

One of the primary reasons that has prevented black students from having a wholesome and socially rewarding experience at Lafayette College has been the absence of social and cultural outlets. The black student is plunged onto the Lafayette College campus. Traditionally modelled on a Ivy-white world, and is left with no opportunity to stabilize his social being and identity. This is why we demand a cultural center that would manifest the Black Experience. A

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When you know
it's for keeps

All your sharing, all your special memories have grown into a precious and enduring love. Happily, these cherished moments will be forever symbolized by your diamond engagement ring. If the name, Keepsake is in the ring and on the tag, you are assured of fine quality.

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Black House would be a place for black students to socialize, fraternize and experience community. It would be a basis for unification and solidarity for black students. It would serve as a meeting place for both blacks and whites who wish to partake in meaningful dialogue of common concerns and issues. A Black House would add an alternative to the limited choices of residence which are presently open to black students. A Black House would provide central location where all interested college students and faculty members could participate in seminar programs. These programs would concern themselves with different aspects of the Black Man's experience, history and culture. It would also provide these services to the community of Easton and particularly to the black youth of Easton and vicinity.

5. The end or neutralization of the effects of racism on this campus.

All of our previous demands have been aimed at the Lafayette College Community collectively. This final demand is aimed at each individual of this community. Each individual must personally

assume the responsibility of evaluating his own racism and neutralizing its effects on this campus. Then he should aid others in doing the same. This is one realistic approach to the end of racism. All of America must be able to recognize its racism and only then can we proceed to erase these extremely primitive attitudes and to solve the problems

it presents.

If the end of racism cannot be achieved, its effects can be neutralized by the institution of the above demands. The main concept of racism essentially revolves around the ideas of inferiority and superiority, a body or ethnic group projecting the idea of superiority on themselves. The inferiority - superiority concept feeds on ignorance. Ignorance supposedly may be obliterated by education,

which is achieved by exposure. The institution of our demands will, in effect, expose the Lafayette Community to the black culture and its achievements, thereby educating the college community. This education will ultimately remove the idea of inferiority applied to the oppressed and hopefully remove the idea of superiority from the oppressor, it is possible to neutralize the effects of racism

involving the former group. The oppressed will now realize that they too have a great cultural heritage, profound history and a significant role in the society of which they are a part.

Our demands cannot and will not be minimized. The only thing we will negotiate are the alternate solutions that will make our demands immediate realities.

