

Dear Mary and Bill:

Enclosed find a copy of the piece I read at
Malcolm's Memorial.

I have also included the carbon of an article
I recently submitted to the LIBERATOR. I hope
you enjoy it.

Sorry I didn't make the last affair. Very, very
busy! Will visit soon.

Regards to entire family from all of us.

Yours in Freedom,

Cliff, Catherine, Rhonda, Toni, Peter, Cliff Jr.
BROWN

III

EVERY BLACK MUST PREPARE HIMSELF

The struggle to survive has long been recognized as man's primary and basic instinct. No matter what he does or how he does it, every facet of his life's activities, even his attitudes are all connected to his struggle to survive.

Often man is so preoccupied with this necessary action, he is completely unaware of what goes on around him.

The Afro American must devote, unlike other men, consciously, perhaps ninety per-cent of his time surviving.

The Civil Rights groups have left in their wake scores of blacks more aware and enlightened as to the seriousness of "the problem". There is no question but that this is probably the most valid and tangible evidence justifying their activities. They have, legitimately, awakened many a black man who might still be sleeping. They have, and continue to "expose" the problem, and have even succeeded in making the Afro Americans plight the most often discussed topic in black living rooms, street corners, and the primary interest of our students. They "keep us in the world's eyes." However, they too are plagued with the age old question of involvement. All the community organizers in the World find an almost impenetrable wall of seeming indifference when efforts are made to "involve" the average black in the Civil Rights drive.

Marcus Garvey succeeded in gathering thousands of blacks to support his cause. Frederick Douglass made a profound impression on the minds of men. Even our late, beloved, Brother Malcolm X had converted the minds of many a black brother.

The seemingly impetrable wall of indifference is maintained as the most formidable opponent to the organization, and mobilization process.

Recently, there have been the militant, but errant cries of Black Power. Some of our "leaders" have called for the establishment of the Black Political Party. They state that unless we, as a people, have political power, we will not, and cannot survive. On Sunday, March 5, 1967, at a rally for A. C. Powell, Hulan Jack, former Manhattan Borough President used this theme.

Other leaders, such as Stokely Carmichael have called for the economic awareness. The recognition and establishment of independent economic bases.

Still other leaders have stated, publicly, that a sort of self generated, self-help program to "improve our lot" is what's needed.

All of these arguments have one failing in common, and a legitimate question can be raised in the face of these so-called solutions to the problem;

"How does a man concern himself with these tactical, philosophic questions when each day, each breath is a struggle to survive?

The above concern transcends all other considerations.

The poor Negro is the one who constitutes the masses. Not the middle class. Nor the few rich. All the Civil Rights groups, combined, cannot account for 22 million blacks. All of the people they don't represent constitute the masses.

Now, lets ask ourselves the inevitable question: Why aren't they involved?

The answer is relatively simple. Because - they are too busy surviving !!

It is ludicrous, even blasphemous to think that you are going to appeal to any of man's senses until he has first assured himself that he can survive.

This writer sees the Afro American as possibly (and I by no means imply that men are to be slotted like mail at the post office) fitting into basic categories:

1. A poor man who has had most of the spirit taken out of him by years of "inferiority" and each day sinks deeper into the whirlpool of indifference and helplessness. He gives in. It is the easiest way.
2. The poor man whose oppressions are heavy, however, the spirit of rebellion still sparkles deep inside. He can be aroused.

(This writer subscribes that most blacks fall into this category).
3. The middle class man who has moderately "made it", but has been taught to be ashamed of his humble beginnings, even his origin and color. Therefore, when he rises above the vicious poverty, he does not wish to look back.

4. The middle class black who has seen the trap and skillfully avoids it. He not only succeeds, but retains his racial pride. He recognizes his humble beginning, and his own manhood at having been able to rise above it.

There is also the middle class black who was born that way but identifies; and the middle class black who was born that way but prefers to identify with the white world, and rejects attempts to see black for fear he will be rejected by the whites.

Each of these men, in his own way, is struggling to survive. Often they become so involved in their own struggle, they forget the other is there.

THE QUESTION OF FREEDOM

How do we deal with the survival question, effectively?

The masses of blacks, infact, all blacks can be inextricably bound together not only by their color, but by another essential consideration: Each and every black man within the continental limits of racist America is not a citizen, nor can he claim to enjoy the full rights and privileges accorded to citizens by the Law of the land. There is no way that the questions of freedom, justice, and equality can be separated. They are not concepts that can be fragmented. They are inseparable, indivisible ideas. There is no such thing as a little bit of freedom, or citizenship, or justice or equality. If the law applies to some, and not to others, then the law is hypocritical: The law of the land, infact, is unjust.

Too often, the spokesmen for our people are afraid of alienating whites or for other unknown reasons, they fail to identify the problem at its origin, at its beginning.

The only man of our modern time, who recognized the problem and spoke of it, effectively, was Malcolm X.

The question of survival is precluded by only one other thing. Unless a man has his full rights and is included in, and protected by the law, he cannot wage a successful battle to survive. Unless he survives first, he cannot concern himself with what goes on around him. It is assimple as A, B, C.

Brother Malcolm once stated, "I cannot sit at a table with an empty plate, when every one else is eating, and call myself a diner."

The so-called progress made by blacks is an empty idea, the Civil Rights Bill of 1964 is nothing but a piece of paper. The Voting Rights Bill of 1964 is the same, The educational "advances", the Social "advances", the political "advances", the economic "advances" are, and will continue to be, empty promises unless the Federal Government takes immediate decisive steps to see to it that every law in the entire land is devoid of elements supporting racism. More important, the Government must then set up the machinery to enforce the law. If necessary, with troops at every railroad crossing. Every law, in every municipality must be scanned, and revised -- changed !!

The anti-poverty programs are absolute wastes of money unless a mass is first afforded the opportunity to be productive within the society.

The law strips you of your opportunity to buy boots, and then tells you to follow the course of other minority (American Minority) groups and "pull yourself up by your own bootstraps."

VI

Unless this basic guarantee is secured, the blacks can sing, shout, chant and march for the next four hundred years and then not be assured of anything.

Robert F. Williams, the noted refugee from "American justice", is called a radical. Stokely Carmichael is identified as an anti-American, an incitor of riots. LeRoi Jones is branded as a "hatemonger". Malcolm X was often labeled as a "trouble-maker", who was the antithesis of the "American Negro Cause."

This writer subscribes that if one supports the law, and seeks redress by the use of it, and in the end gains no results, then it is time for other courses.

COURSES OF ACTION PROPOSED:

1. All incidents of armed racism did violence in the South must be met with forceful retaliation. If a black is murdered then a white must die. If a policeman cracks a black head with a nightstick, then his head must be laid open.
2. All energies of blacks and their organizations must be used to storm the halls of the Congress, Senate and White House to demand nothing less than complete revamp of all laws.
3. There can be no fear of alienating whites, because those white brothers who are sincere will stand by your side. It will be as much a test of their conviction.
4. There must be a continual voicing of objection to the Viet Nam war so that the precious dollars spent can be put to more useful purpose of America healing itself internally.
5. Every attempt must be made by black organizations to attack the evils of drug addiction, and crime and merchant exploitation. These forces not only drain off millions of black dollars for white use, but each addict represents another man lost to the cause of freedom.

VII

6. Every white merchant in black communities must, for the time being, be kept honest by adhering to fair price standards or be "closed up."
7. Leaders must resolve their differences in order to effect meaningful changes, and insure unity. A common plan of attack must be mapped out. Basic freedoms must first be secured.
8. Although whites should be allowed to play a role if they so choose, they must not sit in policy making positions.
9. Monies to support black groups must come largely from blacks themselves. If whites give, make it clear they must expect nothing in return. They must understand that they are investing in a program that would enhance the black mans productive potential, thereby contributing to the whole society.
10. Every white and black candidate for public office must be publicly committed to the cause of total freedom for blacks or he must be publicly denounced by all Black Leaders.

This tactic will force reaction of racist whites and make it easier to identify opposition elements.

11. Every black parent in every black community must demand of every State Commissioner of Education high Standards, and adequate (subject to approval of black parents) compensation programs for those who have, for years, been deprived.
12. There must be blockage of work in every major industry and trade union. Also, the demand that the U. S. Government intercede until laws are changed and compliance is guaranteed to insure opportunity of employment.

Lastly, to every municipality in the land, every seat of government the firm, resolute, adamant statement that unless demands are met there is one alternative - confrontation. The inevitable black/white confrontation !

These are but a few things that must be done in order to survive.

And survival remains a moot question until we are citizens, and the rights and privileges of citizenship guaranteed. That comes first.

IS IT THE ANSWER ?:

The aforestated twelve points are but feeble attempts to solve the problem.

Far be it from this mind to be so presumptuous to offer a neatly packaged solution.

I feel that it is important, and essential to be militant, however, we must always examine, well, the course we choose, so as not to end up in the same predicament again. After the revolution what? After the confrontation what?

The following is for certain:

The historical pattern shows us that America, as other nations before it, seems dedicated to the principle of conquest, and enslavement in the name of security. But it seems reasonable to assume that Afro-Americans must never abandon the possibility of the final alternative. Every race of people in the history of mankind has rebelled against tyranny, and there is no reason to believe that our case should be different. Every black man must prepare himself for the inevitable, in the name of survival.

Clifford A. Brown

MY TRIBUTE TO MALCOLM X

There was once a sapling tree, born of the ordinary seed, weaned in roughage, and trapped in the vertically striped prison of the forest.

It was allowed little moisture and the sunlight rarely reached its starving branches. Though very young, it almost wilted and died.

One day the woodsman came along and noticing the fine color of the saplings bark, and the greenness of its leaves, decided that it should live - He watered it and allowed the sunlight to shine through.

The little tree grew, and grew, and grew until it was finally the tallest, strongest tree in the entire forest. It served as an inspiration to other trees of its ilk with hell bent determination to survive. The other trees admired it so.

One day the woodsman came along, looked at the tree, and decided that maybe it had grown too strong, too tall. Its outspread arms drank in all the sunlight. Its deep roots drank up all the moisture.

The woodsman felt that this tree was going to threaten the very existence of his other trees, maybe the whole forest. The woodsman, jealous of it, decided to, and with a mighty blow, cut the great tree down.

The woodsman has attempted to uproot the stump, but found that the roots had grown too deep. Try as he might, he could not remove them from the black earth. He has even tried to plant other trees on that spot.

II

To no avail. None will grow. He has finally given up after
hardy, but feeble attempts.

Strangely, to this day, each morn, when the sun reaches out
to its zenith - a giant dark shadow is cast far across the
land from the point where the mighty tree once stood.....
The giant spirit of MALCOLM still stands.

Clifford A. Brown