

In His Steps a Struggle to Achieve A Dream of Human Liberation.....

by Holly Robinson, Marilyn Adams, and Marilyn Sheffield

Isn't it odd that today is the anniversary of the death of two great men: the immortal Christ and the very mortal Martin Luther King. However, like Christ, Rev. King shall live through the positive implementation of his philosophy: the struggle for human liberation.

We have straggled from the beginning "to rid the world of hunger, poverty, disease, and all other afflictions crippling to the human spirit of mankind." The struggle has assumed varied faces, employed different approaches in different areas, involved leaders such as Christ and Rev. King, and has not yet ended.

LOCAL LEVEL

Martin Luther King began by attacking problems on a local level — the bus boycott inspired by Mrs. Rosa Parks. He implemented the concept of "creative conflict" to creatively challenge the established oppression which in large cities understands in political, moral, and economic institutions. This was illustrated through King's tactics of non-violence, including civil disobedience, marches and boycotts.

King's creative conflict in the workplace against unfair racism, police brutality, economic discrimination, economic control of all institutions affecting life in the community, and the systematic mental and physical abuse of non-white people.

Since the assassination of King there has been the beginning of an era of increased negativity and a withdrawal of concern with the demands of their people, which has replaced even the abandonment in which King worked.

Black people in America have received sympathy, support and encouragement from non-white people all over the world in our struggle to create for the world a way of life that contains humanity. We have a mandate from the rest of the world to do whatever is necessary to deal most effectively with the problems of race, continued survival in a hostile environment, and freedom, in humanity and liberate the people who

inhabit this hostile system.

This negative environment is reflected everywhere — all of us participate in the deterioration of human life and spirit as individuals, nations, or unconscious limbs of the destruction. Large cities and urban schools are often badly populated by the poor and working classes; however, the cities flourish those who work there in the daytime and spend their money in businesses and services in suburbs outside the cities.

As students, they can afford to allow schools to fall apart, thoughtlessly to close down, black schools and colleges to be placed out in the name of integration, and black people to be daily brutalized by the police.

But, King was the kind of man to accept this moral imperative in life: not only black people, but everyone — the everyone within the system, has to be enlightened before the world can truly be an environment which is life supporting.

We, as black people, can be reinforced truly chosen to act about deteriorating the world. We have a positive insight into the nature of white society from our position outside the society; we have a history of suffering and perfect endurance which no other group has been able to parallel. With our insight, black people in America must accept the moral imperative to expose the manner in which white America continues to prevent the people of the world from having the freedom to determine their own destinies.

POSITIVE CHALLENGE

In accepting this imperative to challenge the society in a positive way, each person must first deal on an individual level, i.e. get yourself together, then your family, then work with the fragmentation in your own community. The object is to establish in a creative way, to build a strong nation which is actively living the principles set forth by the founding fathers.

Concerned white Americans can also accept this challenge. A concrete example of the type of action needed would be an attempt by white

people to bring the higher level of choice and consciousness, by initiating these young people and allowing existing them to act creatively in a positively directed society. The vast examples of this struggle will be found closer to home.

Even at Swarthmore in recent times, attempts have been made to change, but these efforts have been stifled. Swarthmore as an institution can be said to stand for many things King fought against. To the extent that creative changes are stifled in institutionalized processes, the College has shown itself an enemy of progress.

Another example of behavior which is antithetical to King's ideals is a desire of structure existing on the College. There are rules on the bus with no seating for students, the rules are ignored and worked around.

The power structure in Swarthmore in the name of consciousness rather than law-enforcing, so that certain groups depend upon individual situations in which decisions are left to the discretion of a certain person or group of people. This discretion is not institutionalized, and just may shift from one person to another depending upon each new situation and on the person filling the role.

COLLECTION

An example of this negative attitude definitions in the Collection last First, it was said that Collection could not be opened for a period unless he did not attend any Collection at all — this was the President's Club. However, within a week, a new Club was approved by the faculty, the Black Club, which allows students to meet, without making it an all or none decision. But how many students who wanted to be exempt from Collection knew of this arrangement?

The so-called "integrational style" at Swarthmore can also be debated. Integration means full participation by all concerned on racial integration at Swarthmore, on only one level — there is no race for an integrated student body, but minimal integration with respect to the middle management level with faculty or in the decision-making mechanism.

Black students in an attempt to change their surrounding environment creatively, have initiated a number of issues and developed new programs. In trying to expand Swarthmore's culture, black students have felt it need for recognition and representation of the black perspective.

BLACK PERSPECTIVE

This need prompted the drive to the institution of a black studies program. It is hoped that the studies will be a challenge to Swarthmore to recognize that the world has given about the same level of inclusion, that cultural pluralism is a reality, and that the black perspective must be represented.

We, as black people, have many questions about the power structure in the institution not clearly defined before. We have questioned what

Partnership Aid Awarded for Graduate Studies

extended period of time. The subject of White ancestry may be used at having in the United States or abroad.

Partnership Fellowships are awarded to give encouragement and support to students who plan to become college teachers. Selection is based upon scholarship, character, and potential effectiveness as a teacher. A single student is awarded \$1800 for the academic year, while a married student receives \$2400 for the entire year. Either stipend may be granted for up to four years. A Partnership award may be held concurrently with another fellowship, although the stipend is withheld until the other grant expires.

Last year, Swarthmore students

(Continued from Page 2)

ration is, and have attempted to make it creative and meaningful — the black philosophy course is a result.

SAAB as an organization has begun establishing contact and support with the community by recognizing distinctions between "workers" and "students", and by involving ourselves in learning situations within the community.

In a desire for meaningful communication and dialogue with the rest of the college community, SAAB has presented Afro-American History Week programs. Dialogue for understanding and relevant communication have been held — after Martin Luther King's death, and at planetary meetings during the recent crisis. (M.A.S. JAH00004990)

Black discussion has been revived by the opening of a position for a Black Dean of Admissions. It is not enough merely to form a faculty advisory board, accepting black students according to criteria set up by others, without use of a black perspective. He needs to be given freedom to use his knowledge and to be as creative as he can be, and to have the necessary facilities and influence to implement his ideas.

Therefore, it is hoped that this person will be a policy-maker, setting up inclusive and more meaningful criteria for admitting black students. We have decided upon a candidate for the black admission officer, and strongly hope our recommendation

will be accepted, as a commitment to the best interests of black people which is to ensure the best interest of the entire Swarthmore community.

SAAB is currently in the process of setting up a fund in honor of Rev. King, for the sons and daughters of black employees, to be used in their own educational quest. (M.A.S. JAH00004990) This is only one of the actions SAAB has taken to support and nurture the talents of the descendants of Africans in this country.

This article has pointed out only a few of the issues to be dealt with by "creative conflict" which we, as Swarthmores, have attempted to initiate. Black people are joining the struggle to realize the death of Martin Luther King and to develop new models for living and learning. These models must recognize the multi-dimensional nature of man, i.e. that man's mental, spiritual as well as physical dimensions are inseparable.

We will continue to challenge and to contribute to the learning situation at Swarthmore as we pay tribute to our actions, to those who have died in the struggle for a better world. We do this for us who are living in the present struggle and for the world of the yet unborn.