R E P O R T   R E S U M E S

ED 017 602   UD 005 682
THE BLACK UNREST, PART OF A SOCIAL MOVEMENT TOWARD HUMAN
RIGHTS.
BY- SHERIF, MUZAFER   SHERIF, CAROLYN
PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV., UNIVERSITY PARK
REPORT NUMBER PSU-PP-1   PUB DATE 10 FEB 68
EDRS PRICE MF-$0.25 HC-$1.24   29P.

CIVIL RIGHTS DEMONSTRATIONS, RIOTS, AND OTHER COLLECTIVE
MANIFESTATIONS OF UNREST IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY SHOULD BE
VIEWED AS A DEVELOPING SOCIAL MOVEMENT ROOTED IN CERTAIN
BACKGROUND CONDITIONS OF INEQUALITY. PREVIOUSLY NEGRO LEADERS
ADVOCATED ATTAINING EQUAL RIGHTS WITHIN THE WHITE POWER
STRUCTURE, BUT NOW THE "MOTIVATIONAL BASE" FOR THE MOVEMENT
FOR EQUALITY HAS SHIFTED TO DEMANDS, ESPECIALLY FROM THE
BLACK MUSLIMS, FOR DISSOCIATION FROM WHITE STANDARDS AND
INSTITUTIONS AND FOR AN IDENTIFICATION WITH OTHER NONWHITE
PEOPLES IN THEIR STRUGGLE FOR AUTONOMY. SINCE THE MOVEMENT IS
SHAPED BY INCREASINGLY URGENT DEMANDS FROM THE NEGRO RANK AND
FILE, THEIR LEADERS HAVE ASSUMED AN INCREASINGLY MILITANT
STAND. AND ALTHOUGH IT IS CHARACTERISTICALLY DIVIDED INTO
FACTIONS OF CONSERVATIVE AND MILITANT GROUPS, THE MOVEMENT
HAS MADE EFFECTIVE GAINS TOWARD THE GROUP SOLIDARITY
NECESSARY FOR "BLACK POWER." WHITE EFFORTS TO DEAL WITH THE
BLACK COMMUNITY MUST RECOGNIZE THIS NEW MILITANT MOOD AND THE
MOVEMENT'S LEADERSHIP, HOWEVER EXTREME. NO TOKEN INPUT OF
FUNDS WILL NOW END THE WIDESPREAD DISSATISFACTION OF THE
NEGRO. HE WILL REALIZE HIS HUMAN RIGHTS WHEN HE GAINS FULL
PARTICIPATION IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES WHICH HAVE FOR
SO LONG DETERMINED HIS DESTINY, AND WHEN WHATEVER EXISTING
WHITE RACISM IS ELIMINATED. THIS INVITED ADDRESS WAS PREPARED
FOR THE CONFERENCE ON THE CHANGING BLACK COMMUNITY, ORGANIZED
BY THE PENNSYLVANIA HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION, EPHRATA,
PENNSYLVANIA, FEBRUARY 5-8, 1968. (LB)

05682

THE BLACK UNREST:
PART OF A SOCIAL MOVEMENT
TOWARD HUMAN RIGHTS

Muzafer Sherif
Professor of Social
Psychology

Carolyn W. Sherif
Associate Professor of
Psychology

Psychosocial Studies Program

February 10, 1968

THE BLACK UNREST:

PART OF A SOCIAL MOVEMENT

TOWARD HUMAN RIGHTS

Muzafer Sherif   and   Carolyn Sherif

Professor of Social Psychology   Associate Professor
Department of Sociology   Department of Psychology

The Pennsylvania State University

We shall first give a digest of our theme. The nature of the changing black community is not something to be taken lightly as all of us have been learning, especially during the last ten years. Nor has the change dawned suddenly without prior signals. It has been simmering for decades. The changing black community will have profound consequences in shaping the course of human relations in this country. The change in the black community is not reflected in just this or that episode of social action, or this or that particular organization. It is an ongoing and growing pattern of attempts on the part of its active leaders and rank and file. In short, it is an ongoing, growing social movement. Only when conceived as an ongoing and growing social movement can one develop an insight into the nature of actual and incipient changes. And only through such insight into the nature of social movements can one truly appreciate the potential of this social movement as a creative force, rather than a disruptive force.

II

This seminar is devoted to problems so urgent and pressing that such seminars and workshops are currently being organized all over the country under the auspices of various state and city authorities, private organizations and concerned individuals, as well as federal agencies. Such meetings and councils are a response to the urgency of events, the restlessness and direct action of people who are underprivileged in a land of plenty, whose rights to equal opportunity have been pitifully curtailed, who have endured frustration and humiliation for decades and decades, and whose dignity and existence as human beings have been denied and trampled upon.

Our discussion starts deliberately with the widespread nature of the state of restlessness and disenchantment beyond the bounds of one locality, one state or commonwealth. Emphasis on the wide scope of the restlessness and disenchantment is necessary for proper insight into the nature of the changes underway in the black community and the nature of changes necessary in society at large. Such emphasis brings the sober realization that the roots of the changes, the underlying restlessness and feelings of exasperation are deeper than what single individuals can observe in one locality or one state.
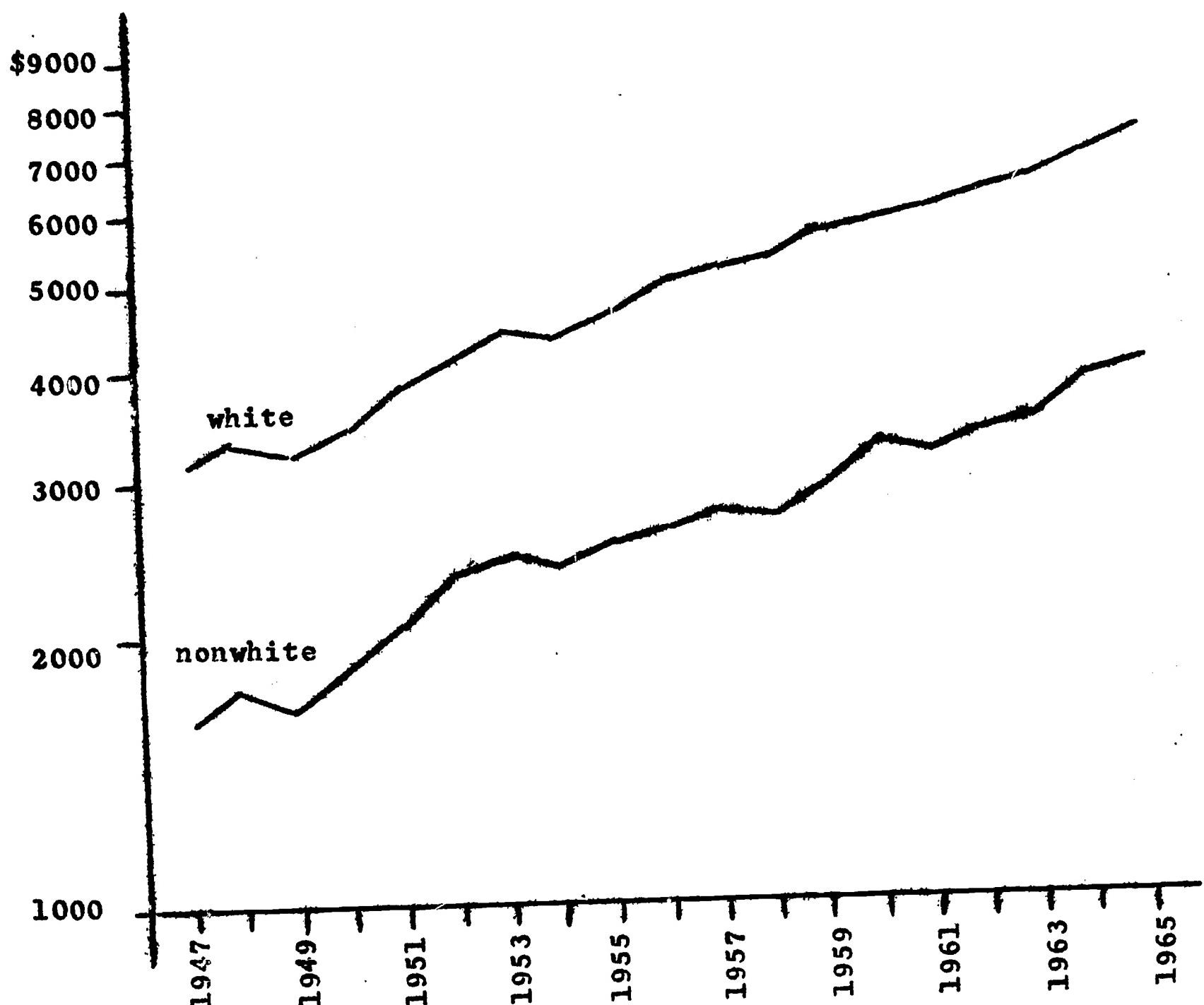
When we were first approached about the programming of this seminar and asked to prepare this paper, it was gratifying to find the organizers of the seminar in sympathy with our suggestion that the roots of restlessness and the actions that they arouse be explored first, and that the voices of those directly affected be heard, especially the young people, including the militant ones, before going into considerations of practical steps that will measure up to the changes that are needed and required. In devising practices that will do justice to the requirements of a changing black community, one cannot afford to rely on journalistic verdicts or vindictive, repressive ideas formulated as a direct response to protests, rallies, demonstrations and more militant flare-ups like riots. One has to avoid the role of a judge in either condoning or denouncing them, but go instead to the root causes of such collective flare-ups--whether they are violent or non-violent.

The necessity for going into the causes of collective behaviors like riots is an idea that has been repeated by many people, both inside and outside of state and federal government. As many people have pointed out recently, poverty, lack of equal opportunities in work and education, the ghetto existence, miserable housing and living

conditions, and the existence of both open and more subtle forms of prejudice and acts of discrimination in all spheres of social life are certainly among these causes. It should be obvious by now that efforts to eliminate poverty, to increase equal job opportunities, equal educational opportunities, opportunities for decent living conditions, opportunities in the professions, and so on are essential: these are musts.

But here, too, it is no longer sufficient for a human being in this country--black, white or yellow-- just to have a steady job, a roof over his head and some food to eat. It is not enough to have the bare essentials of education. For, human beings-- be they white, yellow or black--do not judge what they are and what they have and what they do in absolute terms, but in relation to others, especially if the others have put on an air of superiority with special privileges and claims of dominance, and have practiced their dominance by brute force and laws they imposed for decades.

The relative nature of the experience of satisfactions and dissatisfactions can be illustrated easily in the area of income. It is true that income has been rising in this country, including that of the Negro population, and that some segments of the non-white population have enjoyed substantial increases. However, the Negro unemployment rate is still much higher and, more specifically, the pitiful gap between white and non-white income has not closed a bit. The persistence of this gap is illustrated by the distribution of average income for whites and non-whites between 1947 and 1965, as presented in a diagram by Herman Miller, the expert at the U.S. Census Bureau, who based his figures on the Current Population Reports (1967).

The income gap between white and black
populations is not closing.

The diagram of median income of families for nearly 20
years (1947-1965) adapted from Herman Miller, based on
data from Current Population Reports, U.S. Bureau of
the Census, 1967, p. 4. Series P-60, No. 53

As this diagram shows, <u>relative</u> to white income, the non-white community is no better off than it was twenty years ago.

Such facts as these, as well as the social-psychological consequences, have to be included in any analysis of the emerging angry mood and attitude of the changing black community. The emerging mood and attitude have reached such a state of exasperation that what black people want and rightly claim is no longer just getting any old job, or some education or even a good position in life handed down by the established power structure of the status quo. Like anyone else, they want the necessities of life, the good things of life, education, and a station in life, but with <u>full participation in and control over their own destinies.</u>

The desire of people for self determination will be very much a part of the main theme of this presentation, namely changes in the black community as part and parcel of a developing social movement. The bill of gripes and the claims for self determination in their own plight and destinies have been expressed forcefully and so widely in recent years that they already fill a small library. The published works and pronouncements of people like Whitney Young, James Baldwin, Martin Luther King, Louis Lomax, James Farmer, James Forman, Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton are among those making the more articulate statements, of course with variations in intensity and in tactics, as you all know.

The analysis of the roots or causes of protests, demonstrations, riots and other violent or non-violent modes of collective behavior requires that we evaluate their antecedent conditions and the conditions prevailing in the larger scene. It requires a perspective larger than that gained by the easy conclusion putting responsibility for these events in the laps of a few agitators. Human beings--black or

white---seldom if ever engage in collective actions or outbursts unless they are already in tune, unless they are in a state of restlessness, frustration and disillusionment. It is largely conservative commentators on the social scene who can see nothing more at the roots of collective actions than the conniving of a few agitators. However, collective actions can and do occur without any evidence of agitators--- and no one listens to agitators who do not tune into the proper wavelength.

We can gain insight into the workings of many forms of collective flare-ups, including riots, if we view them as part and parcel of a social movement of long duration, instead of discrete events created by a few agitators, or instead of particular failings on the part of this or that policy or city during the heat of summer. The particular events associated at the moment with such flare-ups, like riots, are, in fact, only triggers to action, for which other triggers could easily be substituted. Flare-ups in American cities, for example, are not unique events of the long, hot summers of the 1960's. Way back in 1943, the Detroit race riots, in which whites perpetrated the violence, were triggered by a relatively minor incident on a bridge at Belle Island. But as the sociologists Lee and Humphrey (1943) noted in their book on the Detroit Race Riot, the outbursts might easily have been triggered at any of a number of places by other incidents during the simmering tensions in Detroit, instead of on that humid Sunday evening of June 20, 1943.

When seen as parts of a social movement rising from accumulated deprivations, frustrations and injustices, the causes of collective flare-ups of various sorts acquire quite a different significance than when regarded as so many disorders without rhyme or reason, or as the result of sheer impulsiveness, or psychopathology, or the doings only

of a few agitators and trouble makers.

During February of 1960, the four freshmen who staged a sit-in in Greensboro, North Carolina, and the tens of thousands who participated in sit-ins the following year, were denouced for everything from breeding strife to inciting anarchy. Their non-violent collective actions, prompted by the denial of their most elementary human rights, were seen as unwarranted disorders, as the doings of outside agitators, and as the impulsiveness of headstrong youth. Yet, according to the evidence, the sit-ins started spontaneously, in the sense that they were initiated by the students themselves, and they were anything but impulsive. After a few experiences, the young people held classes to school and discipline themselves in ways to avoid being hurt. For example, here is a sample of the instructions actually used in such a class: "You may choose to face physical assault without protecting yourself, making plain you do not intend to hit back....To protect the skull, fold the hands over the head ..." and so on. (Zinn, 1964)

III

It will not serve a useful purpose in this discussion to go into the descriptive details about the bus boycotts, the sit-ins, the marches and the riots that have marked the national scene for the last dozen years. For these events represent only the snowcap of a massive iceberg submerged beneath the surface. What is submerged is a social movement that has simmered, from long years of slavery, injustice, suppression and humiliation and that has coalesced with increasing rapidity, especially as black people have moved to the cities in the south and the north.

In short, it is our thesis that changes in the black community and specific collective actions involving its members have meaning only

when viewed as part and parcel of a social movement simmering for a long time, that has gained momentum rapidly in recent years, partly because its early successes did not alleviate the sufferings of its masses, and partly because of the obdurate resistance and complacency of the white community.

Many of you know more about the specifics of current conditions in the southern cities and countryside as well as the ghettos of northern cities. The only excuse that we as social psychologists can offer for this formulation is that we can extract from the historical trends and current details some pattern that clarifies contemporary and probable future events. This pattern, in turn, is reflected in specific black communities, both in internal problems and in relations with the dominant white majority.

Despite the unique historical features and development of this social movement, the characterization that we present was not derived specifically from a study of Negro history in the United States.* It is a general characterization that applies to any social movement, religious, political or social. If it applies in this case, which we believe it does, it is because any people---yellow, white or black--- given certain conditions, prompted by motivational urges, frustrations, humiliations and determined aspirations they share---do organize such movements, which set them into more effective motion at last to do something about the unbearable plight they are thrown into by the power sturcture of the status quo. The United States, itself born from a successful movement for independence, has witnessed many social movements ranging in scope from the labor movement to struggle for the women's suffrage.

---

*The formulation that follows, as well as material concerning the black movement, is condensed from two chapters written by the authors for the forthcoming book: Systematic Outlines of Social Psychology: (New York: Harper & Row).

In order to avoid any misunderstanding and to be talking about the same
thing, we had better be specific about what a social movement means.
Let's start by stating what we do _not_ mean, then come to the positive
statement of what we do mean by a social movement.

First, here is what we do _not_ mean:

(a) A social movement is _not_ initiated as a single established
organization or group that can be understood entirely in terms
of its stated purpose, its leadership and members, even though
such organizations and groups may participate in the movement.

(b) We do _not_ refer to a single episode or a series of episodes
of collective action, such as a march, a rally or a riot, although
such episodes are integral parts of a movement. But there is much
more to a social movement than its collective action episodes like
demonstrations, protest meetings, marches and boycotts.

(c) We do _not_ imply that a social movement represents a complete
consensus or unity of purpose, of goals or tactics at a particular
point in time, although such unity may develop as the movement
nears its climax as, for example, near the end of the movement
for independence from Great Britain when a majority of the
American colonists joined in unity toward its goal.

Now to the positive side: _What is a social movement?_

(a) A social movement is a pattern of attempts to bring about
social change(s), developing in phases over time. Since its purpose is
change, a social movement invariably encounters opposition from the
moment it starts to proclaim the need for change. Hence a rising social
movement is always countered by intensified opposition to the last
ditch. The changes advocated by a social movement always step on the
toes of vested interests. This is the aspect of interpartisanship—
the drawing of lines between those who are in and those outside and

those of the opposition. Very frequently, the rise of a social move-
ment gives birth to active counter-movements with the goal of suppres-
sing change. Therefore, the course of a movement cannot possibly be
understood apart from its opponents. For example, the Ku Klux Klan and
its variants became most virulent during the so-called Reconstruction
days in the South and has experienced a revival as the Civil Rights
movement developed in the 1950's.

Before going to the next point, one important implication of the
goals and the opposition encountered by a social movement should be
noted. Proportional to the scope of the changes proposed and to the
opposition encountered, the individuals who participate in the movement
change in their attitudes and outlook. These changes involve progres-
sive delineation of who and what they are, and who and what they are
not, as we shall see. In other words, there is a rise of self-identity
sharpening with the intensity of hardships and obstacles encountered.

(b) A social movement is initiated through the interaction among
people prompted by a common motivational base, that is unrest, depriva-
tion, insecurity, frustration, disaffection and disenchantment with the
status quo, and is carried out by those directly affected and by those
who throw their lot with them, who are often more fortunate and some-
times are intellectuals willing to go through the tribulations required
by active participation in a social movement. This motivational base,
although not sufficient for the development of a movement, is crucial
in understanding the entire course of the movement. It is also cru-
cial for understanding who does and who does not participate in the
movement.

(c) A social movement proceeds over time, developing first
through declarations of a bill of gripes--that is, negative denuncia-
tion of the status quo--and then through formulation and proclamation
of a platform or ideology--that is, a positive statement diagnosing the

causes of the ills and stating the changes that are proposed.* Of
course, it is during this phase that leadership becomes critical, and
that factions or splits are common in social movements. Such faction-
alism can be referred to as a crisis of leadership. Here too, however,
the ups and downs of factions and their leaderships can be understood
only with reference to the motivational base afflicting the rank and
file. As we shall see, the "crisis of leadership" in the Negro move-
ment, noted by various authors, is closely related to how well the bill
of gripes and the positive platform fulfill the needs aroused in the
rank and file, as they see them. Thus, in recent years, there has
been a trend toward rejecting the Booker T. Washington-type diagnosis
and platform of uplift for the Negro people as they fulfill lowly but
necessary functions, and a shift toward documenting the guilt of the
white community (Walden, 1960). The resonance aroused by the shift to
"whitey" as the source of ills was observed as the Black Muslims came
into the public eye, with their platform of religious virtue, separa-
tism, and clear denunciation of white racism and colonialist exploita-
tion. Referring wryly to their diagnosis, James Baldwin remarked that
other factions "had the faith" but the Muslims had "the facts" (Lomax,
1965, p. 191). At this date, therefore, it is not surprising that the
words of Malcolm X and Stokely Carmichael, for example, proclaiming
the bill of gripes against status quo seem to find more eager recep-
tive ears among the afflicted masses.

(d) Over time, a social movement proceeds through a variety of
organizational and action processes and transformations which, in their
turn, can be understood only in terms of the motivational base, the

---

* CF. "The Psychology of Slogans," In M. Sherif, Social Interaction:
Process and Products. (Chicago: Aldine, 1967)

statement of gripes and the positive aims for social change accepted by the participants. At any given time, the particular diagnosis and platform may be the topic of controversy within the movement or may be widely shared. In any event, the tactics and action follow from the diagnosis of the ills and the positive aims in the platform of the movement. Their success in attracting participants, in turn, reflects the motivational base of the movement.

It is necessary to emphasize this point in order to understand the role of leadership in a social movement. Of course, leadership is crucial in the development of a social movement, both in polarizing its program and in coordinating action. Of course, leaders do shape the character and tactics of the movement. However, leadership of a social movement is always and inevitably shaped by the rank-and-file, who share the motivational base both within and outside the movement.

Martin Luther King, at the time a twenty-seven year old Baptist minister, rejected the presidency of the local NAACP with the pretext that he was too new to Montgomery, just three weeks before he was chosen to chair a mass meeting held to formalize the Montgomery bus boycott on December 1, 1955 (Lomax, 1965, p.93). Yet he emerged from the boycott a national and international figure. Later, in 1963, while in Birmingham jail, he wrote with regret to white religious leaders who had tagged him as an extremist: "...I stand in the middle of two opposing forces in the Negro community. One is a force of complacency...The other is one of bitterness and hatred and comes perilously close to advocating violence" (King, 1964, pp. 72-73). He correctly predicted that dismissal of his moderation would lead millions toward the more militant position.

As Louis Lomax, in turn, observed, "the Black Muslims have

forced every Negro spokesman in America to assume a position more extreme than that he would have assumed had the Muslims not been among us." The reason he gives is that once the Muslims stated their case "the Negro spokesman who speaks less of the truth...simply cannot get a hearing among his own people" (p. 191).

In brief, a social movement cannot be understood simply as the doings of a few leaders, for, in fact, the leaders are continually shaped by the rank and file. Of course, the leaders contribute to the rise of a social movement. But the conditions that give rise to the movement have a great deal to do with the shaping of its leaders. This point has important implications for the constraints placed upon leaders in their negotiations with the opposition. There are limits to which the leaders can commit their own rank and file without being deposed from their leadership position.

IV

Now in the light of our characterization of a social movement, let us state a few implications for changes in the black community. Throughout, it is important to emphasize that the current mood and local events are always dependent upon the particular stage of development attained in the movement. This emphasis is very important for practical steps at the community level. For example, measures that might have been satisfactory to the rank and file before the movement takes shape--such as improvement of living and working conditions, exhortations appealing to people's sense of order, or even pouring money in their direction, may be altogether unsatisfactory in their eyes at a later stage, when the movement has gained a sense of confidence, self-identity and pride in its achievements. Perhaps a few billion dollars towards insuring civil rights and equal opportunity fifty years ago might have gone a long way all by itself. Today, after so many

disillusionments and broken hopes, money alone is not seen as any kind
of cure-all.

A perspective on the black movement in this country shows very
clearly that improvised half-measures and the usual pat formulas for
dealing with great problems will not work now. In this connection it
is instructive to remember that there is a tendency to see money as
the solution of all problems. This tendency was cogently noted by the
Harvard historian Crane Brinton (1965) in writing on great social
changes as the American tendency "to emphasize the...individualistic
economic motive and to minimize such motives as pride, envy, the
'pooled self esteem' of nationalism (and racism), to say nothing of
religious and moral idealism..." (p. 270). The ring of truth in Brin-
ton's criticism comes through in the writings of the more militant
Negro leaders today. For example, Carmichael and Hamilton (1967)
wrote: "Our basic premise is that money and jobs are not the final
answer to the black man's problems. Without in any sense denying the
overwhelming reality of poverty, we must affirm that the basic goal is
not 'welfare colonialsm'...but the inclusion of black people at all
levels of decision-making. We do not seek to be mere recipients from
the decision-making process but participants in it" (p. 183).

The changing black community is no longer in the mood to wait
for the fulfillment of broken promises of equality in employment,
housing, education, recreation and other necessities and good things
of life. They have been disillusioned and disenchanted so many times
since the abolition of slavery a century ago that they are no longer
in the mood to tolerate tokenism. Having had bitter experience and
humiliating disillusionment with counting on the generosity and
largesse of masters or the existing power structure, the black social
movement now wants to achieve self determination of their own lives,

full participation in decision-making and in charting their own destiny, and not reliance on the proclaimed good will and intentions of those whose interests need not coincide with theirs.

This core aspect of the movement is forging toward a self identity or self image proud of its mass origins and basis in the fields of Mississippi and Alabama as well as northern cities, proud of its African origins and culture, proud of black skin, proud of its sympathy for other erstwhile downtrodden peoples similarly asserting their self-determination. Unless this central core--moving to forge a proud and confident self-identity dedicated to self-determination in charting the course of the well-being and future of black people--is kept in mind, there is little likelihood of understanding the social movement or the changes that it advocates, much less establishing workable and constructive relationships.

Background of the Current Mood

The current mood of the black movement toward self-determination, forging ahead a self-identity and self-respect is eminently understandable when we take even a quick glance at the historical background. For the masses emancipated from the cruel and archaic institution of slavery, the period of abortive reconstruction in the South turned into the treacherous path of "Back to Slavery" (DuBois, 1935). The waves of segregationist Jim Crow laws adopted in state after state reflected actual conditions of suppression and exploitation, in which black people lived constantly in the shadow of violence and frequently were its witness and victim. In 1896, the United States Supreme Court's "Separate, but equal education" verdict in the Plessy vs. Ferguson case, of course, amounted to the legitimization of the institution of segregation which was not repudiated until May 17, 1954.

Meanwhile, the Negro leaders who were supported by important white figures were those who, like Booker T. Washington, accommodated to the overwhelming power of white dominance with the hope that industrial education, business enterprise and moral uplift could secure "the cooperation of the whites and...the best possible thing for the black man" (Washington, quoted by Walden, 1960, p. 105). This accommodation meant, of course, that the Negroes would be more efficient farm hands and servants. The decline of accommodating leadership, documented by Killian and Grigg (1964) in southern communities of the 1950's, represented a reaction in the Negro community delayed half a century by the stone wall of racism.

Not the least, but the most powerful representatives of the power structure let it be known that, for them, a "nigger" was a "nigger," no matter what his accomplishments. A senator from Mississippi (J.K. Vardaman) stated the white supremacy view very concisely: "I am just as opposed to Booker T. Washington as a voter with all his Anglo-Saxon reinforcements, as I am to the coconut-headed, chocolate-colored, typical little coon, Andy Dotson, who blacks my shoes every morning. Neither is fit to perform the supreme function of citizenship" (Quoted by Lomax, 1962, p. 40).

Despite the penetrating analysis made by Negro intellectuals, and the determined efforts of Negro educators and white liberals toward education and more nearly equal opportunity for Negro citizens, the historical trends that lifted Negroes from de facto slavery were not primarily their doing. As well documented by the sociologist Franklin Frazier, it took two bloody World Wars and their aftermaths, socio-economic trends that brought Negroes and whites alike from country-side to swelling cities, and the struggle against Hitler's racism in which Negroes shared only to return home to the homegrown variety

where the black man was still "last to be hired and first to be fired"
(Frazier, 1957 a).

After World War II, neither whites nor blacks could ignore the
blatant inequalities in their own country when colored peoples were
rising all over the world to take their destinies into their own hands
as independent nations. Indeed the spokesmen of the federal government
were mindful of America's image in the eyes of the world as the Supreme
Court handed down its historic 1954 decision and, subsequently, as the
concerted struggle for desegregation began (Killian and Grigg, 1964).
And Negro Americans were struck by the harsh contrast between the dig-
nity of new nations in Africa and Asia, and the degradations suffered
daily by Negro Americans. James Baldwin wrote sardonically: "At the
rate things are going, all of Africa will be free before we can get a
lousy cup of coffee" (quoted by Lomax, 1962, p.88).

Of course, the land of opportunity had opened doors to some
Negroes--educators, intellectuals, artists, performers, athletes, busi-
nessmen. And what had the golden opportunities to success on the basis
of individual achievement brought the growing middle class under the
circumstances? Franklin Frazier in his Black Bourgeoisie (1957 b)
found a cloudy reflection of white middle class life, a "world of make
believe" in which the Negro middle class was without roots "in either
the Negro world with which it refuses to identify, or the White world
which refuses to permit the black bourgeoisie to share its life" (p. 24).

Like all men thus caught betwixt and between the margins of two
worlds, the Negro successful by society's standards was, in Frazier's
description, full of "emotional and mental conflicts," rejected by the
white world" with resulting "self hatred, since it is attributed to
their Negro characteristics" (pp. 25-26). As Frazier stated it,

the Negro middle class was fast on its way to becoming "NOBODY."
Literary expressions of the empty self-identity awaiting the Negro who
stepped upwards or aside from the Negro masses were forthcoming as
Baldwin wrote that "Nobody Knows My Name," and Ralph Ellison pic-
tured the transition from the South to the northern metropolis as
becoming an "invisible Man." More recently, Carmichael and Hamilton
(1967) start their discussion of Black Power with the imperative:
"We must first redefine ourselves" (p. 34).

Certainly it is no coincidence that rank-and-file citizens,
tired to death of ill treatment on buses where they constituted 75
percent of the patrons, took the first steps toward action in Mont-
gomery, or that young students were the first to grow impatient and
unwilling to wait for access to segregated public facilities. Of
course, they had behind them important federal support in the form of
legal decisions and rulings after the legal gains won by the NAACP.
But the middle class Negro leaders, for the most part, had neither the
clear self-identity nor the daring to take what seemed then such bold
steps.

Role of Rank and File in Shaping Leadership

The more recent "crisis in leadership" has been analyzed by the
Florida State University sociologists Killian and Grigg (1964) as
well as by Louis Lomax (1962), Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton
(1967), among others. This crisis can be understood in part as a
crisis in self identity that American society created for its Negro
intellectuals and middle class in making "success" contingent upon
standards that divorced them from the Negro masses, on the one hand,
while denying full entry into the dominant majority, on the other.
The crisis of leadership refers to the difficulties and lack of

agreement in formulating a bill of gripes and a platform for change with clearcut action programs that touch the motivational base affecting the masses who constitute actual and potential adherents of the movement. Desegregation of restaurants and airline terminals, after all, did not benefit the great bulk of the people who could not afford to eat out or fly, even though it removed one more humiliating barrier for middle-class Negroes.

As the movement has proceeded more recently, the resolution of the dilemma in self-identity has consisted of two aspects, both visibly underway for a number of years:

1. The dissociation from those white standards, institutions and values that define the black man as inferior and, in some cases, the repudiation of whites themselves as the symbols and cause of the Negro's plight. This disenchantment with or even rejection of white values and institutions that affect the black man was manifested in various ways and in varying degrees throughout the movement. To the Black Muslims, the mental divorce was to be complete, so that Malcolm Little became Malcolm X, symbolizing rejection of the slave name tagged on by white masters. The extreme forms of rejecting everything American and directing the search for self-identity exclusively to non-white symbols, as represented by the Black Muslims, were seen by the Oberlin sociologist Yinger (1965) as "illustrative of the consequences of discrimination." He advised that "our objective should be, not to suppress such movements, but to change the conditions that produce them" (p. 91). However, the recent search for a black identity should not be equated entirely with the Black Muslim position. In all cases, the dissociation from dominant white values of superiority is a position conducive to affirmation of one's self as a black man, with

dark skin, to be viewed with pride.

2. The other aspect of the resolution of the self-identity crisis involved turning towards other nonwhite peoples and looking elsewhere for values to replace those rejected in White America. Of course, this aspect involved closing ranks among themselves, but it also involved appreciation of national movements of colored people around the world. The Black Muslims repeatedly emphasized the common lot with other Muslims and other non-whites who, of course, constitute the majority of the world's population (Lincoln, 1961). More recently, Carmichael and Hamilton (1967) stressed that the black American's efforts toward equality must not "be viewed in isolation from similar demands heard around the world" (p. 179). The analysis by the Florida sociologists Killian and Grigg (1964) refers to the appeal of the emerging African nations to the masses of black Americans. "Whatever the white man's evaluation of these events, Negroes find in them a new source of 'race pride.' But this is not the sort of race pride the white man has so long encouraged the Negro to develop, an illogical sort of pride which would let him still look up to the white man" (p. 127).

To some white Americans, including those liberals who have participated in civil rights organizations, the twin rejection of white values and the positive assertion of black-ness is a somewhat disturbing phenomenon, particularly if one has been schooled in the dictum that the color of one's skin does not count, but what a person does. Now, to the surprise of a good many white liberals, many Negroes are saying the color of one's skin does count, that they want respect for their identity as black men of African origin, and that respect on the basis of individual merit should come, not first, but afterward.

Killian and Grigg (1964) have put the matter in perspective by indicating what integration means to the black community under the present circumstances and what changes are needed to remove the threat to the black man's self identity: "At the present time, integration as a solution to the race problem demands that the Negro foreswear his identity as a Negro. But for a lasting solution, the meaning of 'American' must lose its implicit racial modifier, 'white.' Even without biological amalgamation, integration requires a sincere acceptance by all Americans that it is just as good to be a black American as to be a white American ...so that the status advantage of the white man is no longer an advantage, so that an American may acknowledge his Negro ancestry without apologizing for it" (p. 108).

Today, in an American society not yet ready to encourage black identity on a genuine par with white identity as American, there is not yet consensus within the black movement on the diagnosis of ills and the steps required to bring needed changes. In fact, it is a social movement ridden with factions and competing leaderships, ranging from the older moderate organizations like the NAACP and the Urban League, through Martin Luther King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the Congress of Racial Equality, to more militant groups like SNCC and separatist groups like the Black Muslims. In analyzing the crisis of leadership several years ago, Lomax (1962) noted that "there is a basic disagreement between the Negro masses and some of their leaders" centering both on goals, organizational forms and tactics (p. 90). In his view, there was no doubt that "the Negro masses are angry and restless, tired of prolonged legal battles that end in paper decrees" (p. 165) and "demanding that their leaders come from behind their desks and walk and suffer with them" (p. 167).

Today, it is quite safe to say that the trend for the rank and file to push leadership toward action and to affirm their black identity has gained ground since Lomax wrote. The ground swell of sentiment now flows not only from the lowly but from the most fortunate and advantaged young black people. Students at Harvard, Columbia, and Cornell, as well as in Pennsylvania and other institutions of higher learning are forming Afro-American groups, asserting their black identity in organizational form as well as symbols (New York Times, 1967). For example, as Fred Hechinger reported in the New York Times for October 29, 1967, the Harvard-Radcliffe Association of African and Afro-American Students was the center for most activities for black students, who declined "token presence" in other undergraduate organizations in preference for the Association's "sense of unity and expression."

As for the urban masses, it is likely that they have seen a lesson in the repeated demonstration that collective action seems to be required in order for them to be noticed. With reference to the devastating riots of the summer of 1967, Whitney Young (1968) of the Urban League recently felt constrained to tell a group of businessmen that for masses of black people it had become better to be "hated than ignored."

Yet, there are also trends toward coordination of leadership in the black movement. Martin Luther King has spoken of the need for a "summit meeting" of black leaders (Lomax, 1962). The conference on Black Power that met in Newark in the summer of 1967 was called in the effort to bring the leadership of various organizations together. Newsweek of January 22, 1968 reported that Stokely Carmichael of SNCC had called a coalition meeting in Washington bringing together "Negro leaders of all strategic shadings from the Urban League to...

SNCC" (<u>Newsweek</u>, January 22, 1968, p. 28). Such varied efforts indi-
cate the tendency for a movement with shared objectives to attempt
coordination as time moves on. In fact, it is this coordination that
is referred to as Black Power. "<u>Before a group can enter the open
society, it must first close ranks</u>. By this we mean that group soli-
darity is necessary before a group can operate effectively from a
bargaining position of strength in a pluralistic society" (Carmichael
and Hamilton, 1967, p. 44).

It follows from our analysis of the current state of the black
movement that any practical measures directed toward improvement of
community and state relations and the conditions of their Negro citi-
zens will have to recognize the existence of both new leadership and
new alignments within the movement, even if the mood is defiant and
the position extreme. In a recent, much publicized meeting in Detroit
on January 30, 1968, concerning jobs and job training, the Reverend
Albert Cleague stated on NBC news that the Negroes themselves were not
properly represented, despite the presence of Negroes at the confer-
ence. A conference convened in Harrisburg by Governor Shafer in
April, 1967 to consider problems of Negro employment was picketed by
Negroes who felt that their views were not represented. And it can be
predicted that future attempts to deal solely with what some black or-
ganizations call "hand-picked" and "captive leaders" of the white com-
munity who do not represent anyone, and failure to recognize leaders
who are securing the ears of the masses, will be exercises in futility.

Of course, no one--white or black--can pretend that meetings
with militant leaders asserting their identity and demands for change
are as cosy and pleasant as discussions with representatives who are
handpicked for their ability to "see the white man's point of view."
However, on the basis of their observations in the South, Killian

and Grigg (1964) point out that "paradoxically, this interaction within a conflict relationship seems to produce positive changes in the attitudes of the individuals involved"---in this case, white businessmen whom they called "moderate segregationists." Perhaps, they suggest, "White Americans may have to learn respect for Negro Americans as opponents before they can accept them as friends and equals" (p. 140).

V

The trend toward self-determination and assertion of self-respect as a black man will be increasingly reflected in the black community in the future. However, this trend, with the associated notion of Black Power as a means for developing rank and file participation as well as developing weight to secure the changes desired by the movement through political process, does not mean that white Americans are to have no part in the process. On the contrary, the success of the movement toward equal opportunity depends, as it always has, on efforts that only white Americans can make toward eliminating their own institution of discrimination and prejudice with all of its cruel and degrading consequences. The existence of the institution of racism and prejudice is in no doubt.

The attitudes of white superiority and prejudice have proven their resilient capacity for survival. For example, research on white Americans has shown that they rank various racial and national groups according to the social distance which they would permit each in a highly consistent fashion--with the invariant result that certain groups, including the American Negro, are placed in a degrading and untouchable position at the bottom. For example, the pattern of social distances obtained in 1926 was very similar to that obtained

in 1946, immediately after the war against Hitler's racism, in assign-
ing the lowest positions to Negroes, other colored peoples, some Ori-
entals, Hindus and Turks (Bogardus, 1947). There has, of course, been
change since these data were collected, especially as many of the
younger generation reject the racist doctrines of their parents.

Yet, the reaction to voter registration in the South, to school
desegregation and genuinely open housing in the North, as well as per-
sistent discrimination in employment, leaves no doubt that the doctrine
of racism and its institutions are alive today. As long as attitudes
of prejudice continue, consciously or unconsciously, white Americans
will continue supercilious airs and the actual practice of keeping
Negroes "in their place." As long as dominant groups are committed to
the proposition that certain peoples are inferior to them, with its
inevitable implication that they are therefore unfit for decision
making at a high policy level, the barriers will be strengthened
against "inferior" peoples' full participation in determination of
their own destinies.

The more militant Negro leaders like Malcolm X and Stokely
Carmichael have stated that racism is not a Negro problem, but a prob-
lem for the white community to solve. In fact, only the white commun-
ity can solve it. Unless racism with its superiority doctrine and at-
titudes ranking people by race, religion and national lines are elimi-
nated, prejudice and discrimination are bound to creep into human rela-
tions, in spite of all the good intentions and policy decisions to
bring about friendship and live-and-let-live across race and
nationality.

Here is what Carmichael says in this regard. "Racism in
America is a white problem, not a Negro problem. And we are trying to
force white people to move into the white community to deal with that

problem. We don't need them from Berkeley in SNCC. We don't need the white college students. Tell the white college students: 'Don't come where the action is...but start where the action is going to be'(i.e. in the white community)" (Quoted in Bennet, 1966, p. 30).

The practical implications of this analysis are obvious, namely that efforts in the United States toward creating opportunities in jobs, job training, education, housing and recreation will not be sufficient to bring about working intergroup relations freed of hate and distrust with their associated episodes of violence, as long as deeply-ingrained racist attitudes, conscious or unconscious superiority claims by the dominant white groups still persist.

As long as superiority claims persist in conscious or unconscious forms, they are bound to poison the relations across races, nationalities and religions. Superiority claims, conscious or unconscious, will prompt new forms of exploitation, as long as the white group assigns to itself the racial qualities needed for decision-making and sees in other groups—black and white—only potentialities for physical labor and skills. On the basis of our brief analysis, we recommend that, if we mean business, we need the following: (1) Careful assessment of intergroup attitudes prevailing in the dominant groups in the white community, without noise, fanfare or publicity. Effective practice can only follow correct diagnosis; (2) On the basis of such realistic analysis of prevailing intergroup attitudes and claims, initiation of a concerted social movement in churches, schools, business circles and through mass media towards elimination of superiority doctrines, prejudices and the practices they produce. Such a movement need not rest solely on humanitarian considerations. Psychological and social science has proven beyond the shadow of any

doubt that there is no scientific or factual evidence whatsoever of
any claims of the inherent superiority or inferiority of any racial
or national group over any other.

REFERENCES

Bennett, L., Jr., 1966. Black power. _Ebony_, Sept.issue, 25-27 ff.

Bogardus, E.S., 1947. Changes in racial distances. _Intern. J. Opin. Attit. Res._, 1, 55-62.

Current Population Reports, 1967. Washington: U.S. Bureau of Census

Brinton, C., 1965. _The anatomy of revolution_. New York: Random House, Vintage Books.

Carmichael,S. and Hamilton,C.V.,1967. _Black power. The politics of liberation in America_. New York: Random House, Vintage Books.

DuBois,W.E.B.,1935. _Black reconstruction in America_. New York: Russell & Russell (Chapter XVI, Back toward slavery)

Frazier, F., 1957 a. _The negro in the United States_. Revised edition. New York: The MacMillan Co.

Frazier,F.,1957 b. _Black bourgeoisie_. New York: The Free Press of Glencoe

Hechinger,F.,1967. A black identity, _The New York Times_, Oct.29, Section E, p. 9.

Killian, L.M. and Grigg, C., 1964. _Racial crisis in America. Leadership in conflict_. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall

King, M.L.,Jr., 1964. Letter from Birmingham's jail. In B. Daniel (ed.), _Black, white and gray_. New York: Sheed and Ward, pp.62-80.

Lee, A. M. and Humphrey, N.D., 1943. _Race riot_. New York: Dryden Press.

Lincoln,C.E.,1961. _The black muslims in America_. Boston: Beacon.

Lomax, L.E., 1962. _The negro revolt_. New York: The New American Library.

Walden,D., 1960. The contemporary opposition to the political and educational ideas of Booker T. Washington. _J. Negro History_,XLV, No. 2, April, 103-115.

Yinger,M.,1965. _A minority group in American Society_. New York: McGraw Hill Social Problem Series.

Young, W., 1968. Statement over NBC television. January 12, 1968

Zinn, H., 1964. <u>SNCC: The new abolitionists</u>. Boston: Beacon Press,

   pp. 19-20.