Black Manifesto
“We must struggle to learn... and learn to struggle”

On Friday, December 6, 1968, we issued a Black Position Paper. That paper outlined the pressing and immediate needs and concerns that Black people face on Washington University’s campus. That Position Paper pointed to the areas to which quick, thoughtful, and meaningful attention and action must be directed. The Position Paper hinted at and suggested programs and means by which this long-standing, unheeded and volatile situation could be alleviated.

This document expounds upon the ideas, conditions, programs, and demands set forth in the Black Position Paper. This document specifies, clarifies, and gives a modus operandi for the ten particular points raised.

If the expressed concern is genuine, if there is a real try for understanding, if the offers of aid are beyond the shallow, if the sincerity espoused is honest, then full acceptance of this document by those who say that they have our best interest at heart and who feel that our cause is just, is inevitable.

For those who are solely in the return of normality to the campus (if this is ever possible), and the bringing about of “law and order”, this document provides the opportunity for terminating certain of the recent extra-curricular activities which are usually not listed in college catalogues. This elaboration of the points made in the Black Position Paper enables Washington University to take a needed step toward the restoration of peace, a peace conducive to productive and progressive changes.

To those conservative bigots, this paper is most definitely a threat, for it promises to replace the status quo with an environment which promotes an atmosphere for Black people free from the subtle, stifling racism permeating throughout this institutions. This new environment frees Black students to prepare themselves so that they may be in a position to attack the greater problems found in society at large.

Bringing about changes that are relevant and meaningful, especially considering the full scope of the matter, isn’t and never was imagined to be, a task without its difficulties.

It is realized and known that implementation and the instituting of the proposals below is not an overnight job. Miracles are not expected to occur.

That there exists in this university certain established groups and bodies responsible for carrying out particular and defined functions is not lost to us in the heat of recent events.

That there are conventional ways and procedures that deal with matters confronting the university is acknowledged.

Furthermore, it is granted that some actions have already been taken, and that some programs exist and that new proposals are under consideration.

However, response through these channels have for the most part been limited. The deplorable conditions are not affected in any substantial manner by these “due processes”.

Faith has been placed in these channels; these channels have not yielded, nor do they show positive signs of yielding benefits. Optimes that which comes from these processes is dysfunctional to the needs and concerns of Black people.
Realizing that the needs and the problems of Black people on this campus are not being met, just as Black people suffer nationally and locally; realizing that the status quo hampers, impedes, destroys, and is seriously detrimental to the best interests of Black people (and therefore to the best interest of the larger society), we call for significant changes within this university. Conditions cry out for new priorities to be established, for new standards raised and for old barriers to come tumbling down.

The following pages are indicative of the types of changes. The proposals themselves are only the beginning. With the initiation of these proposals a new environment is not automatically created. But the commencement of such an atmosphere is undertaken.

**Institution of a Black Studies Program**

In any society, the purpose of its educational system is to provide all members of the society with those skills and tools necessary to maintain and enhance the society. The American society is constituted by an immensely diverse set of ethnic groups with equally diverse cultural backgrounds.

Washington University's campus is a long way from where most of us come from. Our homeland (known to most whites as "The Ghetto"), is hardly conducive to the growing of ivy. "Mother Wits" was our thing; not encyclopedias. We have been the companions of every evil cycle or mania that would strike fear in the hearts of our white compatriots. Those of us who have survived have seen everything but the end. This many of us stayed by trekking from our homeland to your midst; to the Washington University campus. We would not have imagined what awaited us.

As students at Washington University, we have learned something which we choose never to forget.

**WE ARE NOT WHITE. WE DON'T WANT TO BE WHITE. WHAT IS GOOD FOR WHITES IS OFTEN TIMES WORSE THAN BAD FOR BLACKS.**

The Black Studies Program, which is to be instituted by Washington University must re-educate its black students back to their origins. Our education must speak to the needs of our community and our people. We can no longer prostitute our minds to the irrelevant.

It is important for this administration to realize that this program is not a product of reaction. We are well beyond reaction. We are addressing ourselves to a basic change of attitude.

Therefore, we are demanding a BLACK STUDIES PROGRAM, which will radically reform our future education. We demand that we be educated realistically; and that no form of education which attempt to lie, pacify, or otherwise miseducate us will be acceptable.

If Washington University is not prepared to supply us with an education that is relative to our lives, then we demand that the university prepare itself to meet this need, immediately.

We ask for this Black Studies Program because we feel it is not only necessary for our education, but for our very survival. We ask that this Black Studies Program be considered in the light of the stark realities of the American Society. We ask that this program be considered because the destruction of our minds and the current rate of
attrition for our students can no longer be tolerated. We ask that this program be constituted because nothing less will do.

Ideally, we would not need a Black Studies Curricula. The traditional courses now included in the University's curriculum would provide information relevant to all aspects of American life. Ideally, there would be no need to differentiate persons on the basis of the color of their skins. We are all, supposedly, American. However, all of the major institutions, especially educational, have been built upon the ideology of the dominant race in this country, the white race.

The culture of the Black people of this country is a distinct one. It is a real one. The basic institutions of the Black Culture are significantly different from the institutions of the dominant white culture—the family, education, economics, history, origin, sociology, psychology, the expression in music, song, prose and poetry, the language, the life, are all different.

The traditional educational system has not spoken and does not speak to the life of the Black man in America. It is of relevance only to the white values, culture, thought and life. It has been designed and structured to prepare students, black and white, to fit into the white oriented system. We, the Black students of Washington University, demand the chance to acquire knowledge relevant to our needs and the needs of our people! We demand the chance to be educated to the previously ignored Black aspect of American life! We strongly recommend the same change for our white counterparts!

For these reasons we see the legitimacy of a Black Studies Program being initiated immediately at Washington University.

**Committee to be Appointed by the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences:**

We demand representation on the committee and all actions and recommendations of the committee should be subject to the approval of the Association of Black Collegians.

**Committee Responsibilities:**

1. To educate the university community as to what is a Black Studies Program.

2. The committee chooses a Director who shall be approved by the Association of Black Collegians. The Director develops and implements the program with a committee, not necessarily the same one (he should be able to add or remove members).

In the meantime, the committee should be conducting research and laying groundwork for the program, such as determining the number of students that would be interested, and constructing the program so that the students desiring to do so would be able to major or minor in it.

We demand that at least five accredited courses be offered by the Fall of 1969; additional courses should be offered each semester until such time as a Ph.D. may be obtained in said program.
Employment and Promotional Policy Regarding Black People

Considering the present situation of Black people on the Washington University campus, particularly the Black workers and staff vis-à-vis employment and promotion, we demand that the racist situation be changed and improved. We are concerned with the plight of all Black people and demand that the series of abuses on Black people by the supervisory staff and by the subtleness of the overall racist situation be investigated.

We are aware of the fact that the University Committee on Personnel has been established to investigate this situation. We are vitally concerned that the committee be a committee sensitive to the conditions of the Black workers and staff of this university. Therefore, we demand to meet with the administration to assist them in the selection of white committee members who will be sensitive to those conditions. The Association of Black Collegians will contact Black workers and staff to serve on the University Committee on Personnel.

We demand that:
1. The workers have equal representation on the University Committee on Personnel.

2. The employees involved be free from harassment and/or repercussions by any arm of the university, e.g. the departmental personnel and their supervisors.

3. That the livelihoods of these individuals not be jeopardized by dismissal, suspension, prevention from advancement, etc.

We demand that the committee investigate the following areas of employment:

1. Cafeteria-food service
2. Library
3. Grounds and maintenance
4. Maids and porters
5. Clerical

We demand that the investigation cover the following specific points:

1. Hiring procedures

2. Overall pay scale as it pertains to Blacks (why there are two pay scales for the same type job, example: On the South Forty there is one set scale and on other areas of the campus there is another.)

3. Placement Procedures
4. Promotional Policies

5. Union Representation


We will in no way allow this issue to be pushed aside; nor will we allow it to be prolonged indefinitely.

Financial Aid for Black Students

Allocations of funds should not only be based upon financial investigation, but also upon the expense of the student's total university living.

We find that the allotment of student aid on the basis of the Parents' Confidential Statement is unrealistic and insensitive. It is time to realize the reality of Blackness and the anachronistic quality of the white man's fantasy of Blacks.

We attack the validity of the Parents' Confidential Statement as a basis for allotting scholarships to Black students and being based on an irrelevant system of cultural views and practices. The Parents' Confidential Statement operates under a whole sphere of assumptions that are undeniably alien to Black people. The Parents' Confidential Statement does not recognize the legitimacy of the Black experience and its peculiarities which are rooted in the very position of Blacks in relation to the social, cultural, political, and all other institutions of this society.

Although there is a provision in the Parents' Confidential Statement for explanation of any special circumstances which may affect the ability of the parents to finance the education of the student, we must address ourselves to the question of interpreting from concrete circumstances and ascribing meaning to the situation of another people, or, in essence, evaluating the meaning of the explanation when subjected to the same subjective and emotionally-loaded cultural interpretation that is inherent in the very nature of the standards.

For example, the concept of independence when applied to Black ness is a point of concern for evaluation of financial needs. Black students reach the status of independence through different processes and at an earlier time that white students. The notion of responsibility includes a whole realm of experiences extending from Black family life and relating to cultural symbols and means of attaining their value. A Black student, then, although still living with his family after entering college, is not necessarily still considered by his family as eligible to freely receive their financial support. The cultural time limits on the parental obligation have a definite effect on when a child becomes equal to his parents, and consequently must assume self responsibility at an earlier age.

In the light of the aforesaid:

1. We demand a more differentiated view of financial aid for Black students. The assessment of need regarding the financial aid of need Black students should not, in any case, be given in the form of scholarship including loan. Assessment of need by the university should be supported financially in the
form of scholarship, specifically for tuition, room and board, and books. For example:

- Student assessment of need: $1700
- Financial aid should not be: $1200 scholarship and $500 loan
- But instead: $1700 scholarship and $500 loan

Loans and stipends are to be considered in regards to personal expenses such as transportation, entertainment, food, clothing, and general upkeep.

2. We demand that a Black Financial Officer be procured to fully understand the needs of Black students with regard to financial stability, and that this officer be approved by the Association of Black Collegians.

3. We demand that this Black Financial Officer provide for a more comprehensive system of investigation and exploration into the need of Black students.

4. We demand that these revisions be applied to all Black students presently receiving financial aid or requiring financial aid in the future.

**Increased Black Enrollment**

Given:

1. That the head count of total university day students is 6,462 of which 119 are Black, this giving the day university 1.8% Black enrollment.

2. That less than 3% of the new students admitted to the graduate and undergraduate school in the fall of 1968 were Black.

3. a. That the city of St. Louis is 38% Black.
   b. That the Metropolitan Area of St. Louis is 15% Black.
   c. That the National Community is 13% Black.

These conditions call for radical changes in the recruitment policies. We demand the following:

I. Number of Students:
   That 25% of the students admitted to the graduate and undergraduate schools in September, 1969 be Black.

II. Recruitment
   A. Recognizing the recent adoption of the Report of Committee No. 27 and being aware of the fact that the Director of the Educational Opportunity Program will work closely with the Admissions Office,
we demand: The immediate appointment of a Black to a position within the Admissions Office who main area of responsibility will be the recruitment of Blacks. The person who will fulfill the position must be acceptable to the Association of Black Collegians.

B. The Black students will be recruited from all geographical areas of the world.

III. Admissions

A. Academic potential will be the key to the admission of Black students. Recommendations and evaluations by the students’ high school and the Black Admission Officer will be the major factor for admission.

B. Grades and SAT scores shall be increasingly de-emphasized in considering the admission of Black students.

C. The admission procedures for Black students must be acceptable to the Association of Black Collegians.

General Awareness and Sensitivity of the Administration, Staff, and Faculty

Due to the lack of any general awareness and sensitivity of the administration, staff and faculty of Washington University to the distinct needs of Black students, we make the following demands.

We demand that:

1. Seminars to initiate awareness and sensitivity of said parties be established.

2. More specifically, the seminars’ goals will be as to acquaint the participants with the distinct differences of the Black students within the context of this racist culture as the culture defines the situations of racism to which the university is bound.

3. Consistent with the Chancellor’s indication of his basic agreement with this demand’s intent, the university should now begin to allot realistic funds to fashion an inclusive program which will consider in depth all aspects of the Black experience and the contingency of that experience upon the university’s situations.

The Association of Black Collegians regrets the necessity of having to serve as a resource in the preparation of the seminar’s format and its direction. However, we accept
the burden of our awareness. We further accept the responsibility of serving as resource for directing the attention of the university to speakers and relevant literatures.

Consistent with our realistic approach, we remind the university that it need not go to Harvard to find speakers to define experiences in “ghetto” situations. Why not allow “ghetto” resident to address with their own expertise the seminar participants? For such expertise, remuneration should be made.

**University Research of which Black People are the Objects**

In placing our demand in a viable and clarifying context, we present the general reasons for our concern and revulsion with university connected research. This research includes studies emanating from and carried out at Washington University, as well as any research performed through the use of university personnel, faculty, and students, and facilities. We are concerned with:

1. The basic and trenchant racist background which decides what objects are to be studied and by whom.

2. What is done with the knowledge gained from research, most of which lies in the volume of literature praised for their merit, but who programs are never implemented.

3. The systematic exclusion of Black people (community residents), from the optimum sharing of fringe benefits* that results from the process of research.

The definition of **fringe benefits** is a debatable point. This point shall be further illustrated. For now, an example is quite enough to illustrate our meaning: When three-quarter million dollars are spent in studying the Black people of Pruitt-Igoe, some pockets in the Black communities should be filled. Conscious efforts toward the employment of Blacks, and the patronizing of Black businesses as predominant sources to supply all the needed products and services used in research is the minimum directive.

These reasons for our disgust at the general research policies of Washington University faculty and personnel are stated only as indicators of a network problems. We see these problems as rising from the callous, dehumanizing treatment of Black people, their culture, and ideals in the name of “knowledge”.

Indicative of making serious and positive efforts to eradicating the aforementioned problems, we present the following demands.

1. We demand the training and employment of so-called “unqualified” Black community residents on a predominant scale in research staffs. By way of illustration and support of this demand, we offer the positions of interviewer and cleric. By employing readily accessible Black mothers and fathers in said positions, they gain income, skills, and experience with the additional result of limiting biases in the collection of data.
2. We demand the utilization to the optimum extent of the power and prestige of Washington University to influence programs of concrete benefit to Black people.

3. In reference to fringe benefits of research spendings, we demand that Black businesses be given priority considerations in the purchasing of products and services pertinent to the execution of research.

4. We demand that any professor engaged in research in which Black people are the direct or indirect objects corroborate and collaborate with Black community organizations, who will have a decisive voice in the formulation and implementation of research projects.

5. Realizing the existing insensitivity of many faculty members engaged in research of Black people, we strongly recommend that said faculty and staff members attend and participate in the suggested seminars (See point five of the Black Position Paper).

We demand the totally committed and positive efforts of university administration and faculties to solve these problems of racism. Since the university is a part of the fabric of racism having no moral argument of procrastination to fall to, the burden is squarely placed upon its shoulders. We, Black people, readily accept responsibility in helping the university to unchain itself and its personnel from the death-throes of racist practices.

We strongly attack the very subtle, but indefensible racist assumptions under which the university and its faculties conceptualize and conduct research projects. We strongly attack the academic exploitation of Black people. We further attack the procrastinating sham of weakness in influencing individuals that the administration has fallen to. The precedence set over the summer of the administration’s holding up research monies on the grounds of the questionable characters of professors is most exemplary. By logical extensions, the university administration has the power to delay indefinitely, if not completely deny, the awarding of research grants to professors about to embark upon research trails of questionable intents.

Concluding, we demand the immediate cessation of the feeble efforts by uncommitted pseudo-scholars to define Black problems through their limited understandings of Black people. These distorted understandings are derived from hasty, circular, and insensitive research that leads to unfound claims of expertise. Thus, we hope to obliterate the ubiquitous, blind cycles of miseducation under which research is done and its benefits racistly directed.

**Permanent Office and Meeting Facilities**

Washington University provides no adequate facilities for the functions and business of our Association of Black Collegians. Our temporary offices in the Student Activities building were assigned to our organization merely as an appeasement until second semester because the building will then be destroyed.
All officially recognized campus organization, social organizations, and religious and ethnic groups have meeting space either specifically designated by the university or provided by other sources for that organization’s particular use. Most of these organizations have more than ample space for their needs (meetings and recreational rooms). We feel that our bare necessities can be fulfilled in a four room space or house.

All of the black students at Washington University do not reside in the dorm area. Some live with relatives or in off-campus apartments. This increases our need for a central meeting place not only to conduct official business but also to assemble for informal discussion and relaxation.

These facilities will be for the use of all Black students and not only those connected with the Association of Black Collegians and the Educational Opportunity Program.

The following is a detailed outline of the rooms required and furnishings therein. We demand that there should be a set place of at least four rooms which will be equipped and furnished by the university. These four rooms include: a newspaper office, a general meeting room which is large enough to accommodate 75 people, an executive office and a general library-study room. The rooms are to be equipped and furnished as follows:

I. Executive Office

1. Large Desk
2. File Cabinets
3. University extension telephone
4. Four chairs
5. Typewriters

II. Newspaper Office

1. An electric typewriter
2. Two large desks
3. University extension telephone
4. Three chairs
5. File Cabinets

III. Library-Study Room

1. Book shelves lining the walls
2. Small high table for checking out purposes

IV. General Meeting Room

1. Supply of folding chairs (no wooden chairs). Metal chairs with cushions on the seat and the back of the chairs.
In addition to the above, each room is to be large enough to accommodate the purpose signified by the name. These offices should have janitorial service, central heating, and air conditioning. Other things required are adequate lighting, electric outlets, restroom facilities, pencil sharpeners, mail facilities, waste baskets, first-aid kits, ashtrays and coat racks. Also, there will be a set of keys for all rooms and duplicates as needed.

All of the above are subject to change as the need increases.