

SPIRIT

Vol.111 No.4 York College, J.am.N.Y. Apr.-May 76

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SPIRIT MAGAZINE: A THIRD WORLD PUBLICATION

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**EDITORIAL
YORKBORO
ANOTHER STEP BACKWARD**

by Frank Tucker

Keeping in line with the racist regression of the 70's, York College has been fingered for destruction. Chancellor Kibbee, in his February 23rd proposal has called for the removal of York's senior status by reducing it to a two year community college.

It has become increasingly clear to the Third World community in New York City that the fiscal crisis has become the current disguise for our 400 year old enemy—American racism.

York College has had a devastating impact on the Jamaica community. It has uprooted residents and forced them from their homes. As well as closing off streets and closing down businesses. We have accepted these inconveniences in exchange for a four year quality institution of higher learning. This was a major part of the program to "redevelop" or uplift our community. York is actually the cornerstone of Jamaica "redevelopment." Removing the cornerstone would bring about the collapse of a dream for a brighter day.

York has brought many services to its community residents. Our Social Work, Allied Health, Education and other such departments supply many of the needed services to the local community and to the massive city at large. All of these are services which accompany four year baccalaureate programs. A two year institution would not include these quality services in its curriculum.

We have united and showed our strength. Through letter writing campaigns, lengthy meetings and constructive rallying, we have let Mr. Kibbee know that we will not sit back and allow the destruction of our college and our community.

As a result of our efforts, Mr. Kibbee's proposal is being reconsidered. However, the fight does not stop here. We must not allow the City's financial crisis to be the 1976 shield for racism.

□

SOLIDARITY

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Atlanta, Georgia 30314
March 12, 1976

To the Editor:

The attempted assassination of York College is appalling to me. The battle which occurred in the early 1970s to establish York College in Jamaica is still, obviously, being waged. No one presently concerned with York College should naively think that the issues surrounding our school are new. These issues, the existence of York in Jamaica rather than Fort Totten, the budget crises of the past several years, are all a part of a concerted effort to destroy York College. The power structure (which may include some elements in York College's administration), is still anxious to deny us the educational mechanism for uplift. Blacks, Puerto Ricans, Haitians, and poor white folk must realize that this is the crucial issue to be dealt with.

My concern for York College is the same as everyone else's. However, because I am no longer there, my concern is intermingled with elements of nostalgia and memories. The curriculum which was offered to me there can be favorably compared to any in the country. The faculty is of a high quality and the nurture and assistance which I received as a participant in the SEEK program is of immeasurable worth to me. If we could imagine York College not existing then I would never have had the opportunity to study and sojourn in West Africa under the auspices of one of York's sister schools. I would never have acquired an indelible understanding of institutional politics and racism. If York College did not exist then I would have missed sitting at the feet of Dr. Hilda O. Fortune, who provided me with an excellent foundation in sociology and group leadership skills. The sociology and political science departments of York College helped to open my eyes to academic and practical knowledge which will last for my entire professional life.

It is truly difficult for me to imagine York College not existing. It is even more difficult for me to imagine York College being destroyed now. The future would be catastrophically altered for thousands, resident of Jamaica and New York City overall, who seek to reach their fullest po-

tential as intelligent, productive human beings.

Again, I must reiterate that the real issue is not only budget deficiencies, but elitist elements in the university and governmental structure who are determined to deny the common man and woman the chance to live at his or her highest level. It is my fervent hope and prayer that those of you who are waging this most crucial battle for the preservation of York College will fight intelligently, diligently, and with a courage and faith inextinguishable by those who would have us back in the dark ages of ignorance and mental and physical slavery.

I am aware of the letter writing campaign being waged to demand the Governor's and legislative support. I shall forward letters of protest against the proposed debilitating plan for York College.

To new students at York whom I have not had the pleasure of protesting and working with; to the old students with whom a memorable part of my life was spent; to faculty and staff who are determined to see quality collegiate life exist: I implore you to fight hard and long, unflinchingly in the face of those who seem powerful and omnipotent. I implore you to ignore feelings of powerlessness. Power comes from within. And if that power collectively is exerted with faith in yourselves and the goodness of your cause, you shall see victory.

May God's blessings be with you.

Sincerely,

Hermon Darden

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