

Howard conference-- a look at black problems



OPINION by PHIL SECRET

Phil Secret, UNL graduate student in political science, was sent by the College of Arts and Sciences to Howard University's National Conference of Black Political Science Students in Washington May 7-9. The conference attracted representatives from over 60 universities coast-to-coast. The following is Secret's report on the conference.

Cognizant of the alienation and disregard for blacks by the American political power structure, the Howard University Political Science Society recognized the need for a serious look at the problems that blacks face in this area.

The conference had several specific goals. One was to examine the political science curriculum in relation to the needs of black people. This writer attended the seminar which dealt with this matter. The seminar members unanimously agreed that the need to make political science relevant to blacks is pervasive among America's predominantly white institutions of higher learning. The discussion encompassed the needs of blacks in terms of both domestic and international politics.

Various broad categories in the curriculum of political science were discussed. The seminar agreed upon several which all American universities seeking to meet the needs of blacks and present the political climate "like it is" should immediately insert into their political science curricula.

Some of the areas were:

(1) **Politics and Economics.** Under this categorical heading, it would be a good start to begin with a course designed to educate the student as to how American capitalism perpetuates oppression of black folk; how it serves as the vanguard of a doctrine of white supremacy in America.

(2) **Political Socialization.** In this area a course should be offered that analyzes and explains the role of various black socializing agents vis-a-vis the American political system.

(3) **Black Politicization and Mobilization.** Here a course should be taught which deals with the complexities of political organization peculiar to blacks.

(4) **Black Politics.** Courses should be taught in this area that seek to explore the relationship of black institutions to American politics as well as the current role and status of blacks in American politics.

(5) **Black Revolutionary Strategy.** Here, a course should be structured to deal with past, present and future revolutionary movements. In view of the prodigious political genocide aimed at black folk in America today, there exists a need for educating the black student in the methods of revolution, the tactics of the enemy and survival programs.

Many reasons are often conjured up for the failure to include studies that are relevant to the needs, interest, and welfare of blacks. It is often articulated that funds are too shallow or that student interest is not great enough. Notwithstanding, each department is allocated a certain amount of funds and within that finite budget the department may offer whatever curriculum it chooses. Then, the monetary "problem" evaporates to problems of priorities and goals. Blacks demand that they be included within the existing budget; that if the pecuniary assets are not sufficient to offer political science courses relevant to the needs of blacks that a new priority be set so that some of the courses presently offered can be abolished and courses making political science relevant to blacks, substituted in their place.

The University of Nebraska's Political Science Department has recognized the need for course work dealing with the black man in the American political arena. The department plans to take a step forward in September. It will offer a three hour course: The Black in the American Political Process. For more information one may see the University Catalog or Professor Welch. After reading the prerequisites for the course it is evident that many of the few black students of this University will be forced out. This writer suggests that students failing to meet the prerequisites but who are otherwise interested should talk to Professor Welch personally. Black students cannot allow departmental hurdles to deter their needs and circumvent one of the major functions of this University.

The people must be educated as to the real problems of America's political system. Blacks demand institutional changes to speak to the problems. Blacks are aware of the fact that the American educational system is prostituting their minds; that the race struggle is perpetuated by the educational system and we call for an immediate halt to this diabolical, sorrowful, and deplorable condition.

If you are a white student and you are intelligent enough to recognize the shortcomings of a curriculum that presents a distorted picture of American politics, now is the time for you to be a vociferator against these inadequacies. If you are a white student coming out of a super-liberal "bag", organize your colleagues for a march on Nebraska, as you have done for so many other causes, in protest of the role played by the University in the race struggle. Be advised that the race struggle is perpetuated when the educational system paints the system as good at the same time it ignores that fact that the system is geared to oppress the black race.

Blacks are aware that white students cannot mobilize around the same self interests that mobilize black brothers and sisters. But it is not impossible to mobilize around a common objective—the obliteration of a distorted education which fails to tell it like it is.