

Staunch

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The Arts

Richie Riley

Children's Corner

Poetry & Prose

Brother Herman talks about

Harambee

Action Speaks Louder

than Words -

(Conflict surrounding Unity

Association)



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It is also geared towards making the school more realistically aware of that experience and is therefore aimed at pupils and teachers alike.

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WRITING FOR CHILDREN

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For love that's dead.



Getting It Off Your Chest

3

BLACK FACT

By Roy Bartholomew

Age 17

From the beginning, white scientists have searched for means or made up reasons to justify and damn the blacks from being equal or clean enough to join the white throng. Medicine men, in days past claimed that a black mans blood is thicker than that of a white man. Religious men have herded slaves into churches and told them that the Lord God hath said 'Obey your masters or you will be beaten by many straps' So they were brought from Africa to work as slaves on plantations all over the Western world.

Soon, however they were freed. No more work, No more whips, No more degradations — Free! No more masters to determine whether they lived or died — But wait, there's something wrong somewhere! They were free from forced labour but what else? No matter how our ancestors progressed, they were still subjected to degradation. They were free from whips but not from brutality. They may have been free from their masters but not from the white society, who still decided whether they ate or starved.

In your last Issue of 'Staunch' I read the article by Peter Desir. 'The frightened Generation' and realised how closely the present day relates to the past and that things have not really changed very much. It is true that the blacks in the West have made some progress in a short time but did that buy us equal rights? No. Peter Desir, pointed out that some of our fellow blacks behave as though they are still shackled. But what I'd say is that most of us are still shackled. They are held down with the stocks of a society that is showing little interest or care, only hostility to their black neighbours.

However, we are no longer a frightened generation, we have grown in numbers and in strength. We have answered racialism with anti-racialism and we have the strength to demand equality, justice and fair play. The average black is no longer susceptible to the subtle forms of brainwashing. Instead, he is conscious of his colour and race to a point of explosive sensitivity and unbending pride and we still have the backbone to stand up and fight against abuse, mis-use and the hate which is manufactured in the skulls of groups, such as the National Front and some highly thought of, members of the society.

The society denies the right to do what we want to do. We are dismissed as layabouts and trouble makers. What those, who throw accusations, should know, is that, we are not like because of ourselves, that is the result of racial discrimination in this country. We did not come here to be lay about, we came here to work but the society gave us no alternative, they don't even give us the right to work. Many of our people live in dilapidated homes and conditions. They have long abandoned the idea that England is a paradise, with its wide smile and welcome arms. The kids at school are being subjected to racial propaganda and sometimes violence. And that is what we are fighting against, we are fighting against the gross inequality in the society and we have got the backbone to win.

The general statements that we are a very disorganised, selfish, stubborn and unambitious race, even if it is qualified, by saying that we weren't really born that way, but became so, because of our historical background - from slavery to now. However bearing in mind that every living thing is individual and every brain is not the same then why should we automatically accept this as a known fact. Because we were never allowed to prove our greatness in the way which was expected of us, we were brain-washed into accepting that we could never reach the highest heights, and that achievement today belonged to someone else, but not to us.

I would now like to ask questions why in, the year of 1979 we here in Britain still a backward race, who have not achieved very much of life, except maybe a roof over our heads (if we are lucky) and haven't really found the secret art of getting to the top. We are not Directors of companies, or even own companies, there are not many stock-brokers or ship owners. Could it be that we fear to take the deep plunge and if not successful in business, would not be prepared to try climb the ladder of success a second time.

The rate of achievement, as a race is still poor, and do we honestly attribute this to being the excuse that we have not been given the same opportunities as our fellow-whites. After all they too have lived in poor housing conditions, have left school without qualifications and have also found themselves unemployed. So why do we make excuses that it is because of our colour why we are not as successful in anything. Perhaps the truth here is that most of us have no ambition

except to live for today and let tomorrow look after itself. To devote our own time to our own selves — like going to evening classes or really making an effort to find out why there are no jobs, vacant instead of there being easy money from the Social Security, hence encouraging the belief that it is better to accept hand-outs freely rather than finding out that by so accepting, it does not make your race anymore knowledgeable, but more and more totally ignorant, and at the same time dependent on the State. It is obvious that our race follows the wrong example and is easily lead to believe that whatever example is shown it is natural to copy without questioning whether it is right or wrong.

The older generation of people who came from the Caribbean in the early 50's were people of an entirely different era.

They arrived here not knowing how they would fit in or be accepted as a people and bearing in mind, that a lot of us did not realise that we would really be referred to as 'black' began to feel that being brown was not too much of a hangup, but that being 'black' was the most inferior thing that could ever happen to anybody. But because of their general background and up bringing in good christian homes, were taught to accept whatever life offered, took what they were given and didn't expect to receive more. It therefore did not matter whether their children left school with any 'O' or 'A' levels, because they were not aware then of the importance of their children acquiring such things. The mere fact that the member of the black race are offered the more menial jobs did not give parents then the urge to make sure that their children's future offered more to them than a factory job and nothing more. We must remember that immigrants of the early 50's lived in some of the worst conditions that any human could endure, the wages of that particular time was nothing compared to now and there were no equal rights for them. They had to accept whatever they got — be it good or bad. But they survived and they worked very hard to acquire whatever they established themselves in. That did not stop them however in keeping their self-respect and trying to support themselves, without the easy hand-outs.

The generation of today is now a cause for great concern which can be seen in the years to come as being even more enslaved through their own faults by thinking that the world owes them for the suffering of our predecessors.

Instead of seeing that a pathway has been shown to them to take what is there for the taking and learn and fight to better themselves, they have gone back into a different time which no one can really understand.

Does it give them cause for concern? Do they see themselves as we do? Perhaps the time is right when they can now explain why they have turned to crime and not caring about their future. Only they can explain. The State makes it very easy for our kids to survive on the streets. Why? Social workers do not hesitate to take away a child from its parents, and put them in homes. Why? They keep them in homes until they are eighteen and then they put them back into the community. What happens to them then? A young girl can get a flat very easily, if she has a baby and no man. Why? There are a number of questions which we have to ask. We have to ask, why is it so easy, for us to do somethings and so difficult for us to do other.

Monica Forrester



STAUNCH TALKING

Two ARTicles, featured in this Issue of Staunch, arise out of alternative homes for young black people and both are reflective of the current state of the Black Community.

Firstly, Brother Herman in an interview, details the reasons behind his refusal to accept the Urban Aid Grant made to the Harambee Project what he has since suffered as a consequence of his action and plans and hopes for the future. During the last few months, a Black Peoples Support Group has been set up to give support to Brother Herman in keeping the Harambee Project alive and to continue the fight against the state, and is now calling on every member of the black community to give both financial and moral support.

The second and equally important issue, is that surrounding the Unity Association at 90-92 Lancaster Road W1. In the last issue of Staunch we stated that Tony Sealy had resigned as Director of Unity Association and we asked why, after three years, he now found it impossible to carry on after pioneering and developing what is now seen as the most significant black project in North Kensington. Tony Sealy said. "I found it impossible to continue to accept the hounding and harassment of one individual member of the Committee." That man he states 'is Rhodan Gordon' who runs the Black People's Information Centre" in Portobello Road, W10. He continued. "The problem started over nine months ago and the present management Committee failed to deal with or to resolve it. I felt that while I continued to engage in or to defend, what amounted to no more than a personal attack, the job of building and providing the proper services for the young people was being seriously restricted. So it was on that basis that I decided to resign.

On Wednesday 21st March, the residents of the house staged a sit-in, in protest. During the protest they made two demands:

1. That Tony Sealy withdrew his resignation and return as Director of Unity.
2. That Rhoden Gordon should be removed from the management committee.

In response to the demands of the residents, Tony Sealy withdrew his resignation, which was read out to the residents on Sunday 25th March. On learning about the withdrawal of the resignation, the residents agreed to call off their sit-in, hoping that the other question of Rhoden Gordon and the Committee would be dealt with.

On Monday 26th March, at 5.0 a.m. three men, including two committee members, Rhodan Gordon and Frank Sweeny, by use of force, entered the house, woke up the residents and took over the premises. On the same day, following the arrival of the television crew, there was an altercation between the residents and the committee members in the house. Three of the residents had cuts on their hands, which they claimed, were caused by Frank Sweeny, brandishing a knife. As a result of the fighting, the residents were thrown out of the house and alternative arrangements had to be made for their welfare.

The decision and subsequent action of those few committee members must be condemned. However, one may care to justify it, it was wrong. We must remember that Unity Association was not established or does not exist for the management committee but it exists for those young people who live there and should therefore benefit from its services. According to the constitution, it exists to provide homes, education and employment for the young people and following that action by the committee members, there are now a number of Young people who are without a home. Staunch asks 'Can young people, during their adolescent confusion be entrusted into the care of knife brandishing committee members and those who appear to condone such action, breaking in like robbers in the night. Who next will be their victim? Dashiki died, Metr died, Unity is dying and if it dies and we are

asked the question, it will not be enough for any of us to simply plead ignorance or innocence.

At a public meeting, held on 28th March it was decided that a delegation be sent to the house to negotiate the possibility of the residents returning to the house and a solution sought outside of the house. The committee refused to accept them back into the house rather than a look for a genuine solution sought only to justify their horrible action. Can a committee truly claim to be representative?

A number of people, having seen T.V. coverage buried their heads in their hands shouting "Oh no we are washing our dirty linen in public again and what about our image?" Well we ought not worry too much about the whiteness catching a glimpse of it, because it understands it very well, since he played a major part in creating it and a lot of people have benefited from the filth of that image. There is no image that we need feel so anxious to protect because no serious one has been allowed to develop. That small grey space known as North Kensington is littered with the attempts of various people who have tried to do just that. But what exists and has always existed, is a confusion around which, certain people have been able to build themselves large platforms. If one attempted to explain it academically, it is very likely that one would be telling lies, but there has always been an emotional response and it is precisely this emotional response which has prompted honest men to build something of benefit to those people who suffer as a result of that confusion.

Those men who have taken the initiative and as a result find themselves being applauded by some people also find themselves being attacked and victimised by another group of people, because they actually threaten to take something beyond the limitations of that confusion.

The residents at Unity House staged a protest about a situation which was undoubtedly affecting them and one which they were prepared to fight for and on which resulted in them being thrown to the streets by the very people who are supposed to be representing them. Having understood all of this, one does not simply say 'It doesn't look good. One must ask. 'Is it right?' And what am I going to do about it?' Because it will happen again and again and when it does, it will not be simply a case of black people fighting each other or finding it difficult to work together. But it will be just another attempt to clear the confusion.

COMMUNITY

HARAMBEE - DOWN BUT NOT OUT!

Harambee (Swahili for working together) was established in 1969 by the forceful and energetic Brother Herman. Before setting up Harambee Brother Herman spent the better part of his life in Britain fighting for improvements in the black community. North London, the venue for this operation, is one of a number of inner city areas beset by problems of deprivation and disillusionment amongst black people in general and black youth in particular.

The organization's work involved providing support, accommodation, education and employment for vast numbers of youngsters. It is now almost three years since a quarter of a million urban aid which was given to Harambee was returned after a long and heated exchange between Brother Herman and The Islington Borough Council. The main point of contention was over who should hold the Deeds of Properties bought with the grant. The Islington Borough Council insisted that they should hold the Deeds, Brother Herman arguing for the long term development and stability of the black community insisted that the Deeds should be held by Harambee.

In the following interview Brother Herman explains in detail the circumstances leading up to his decision to return the grant, the reasons for this decision, the difficulties he has subsequently encountered and his hopes for the future of Harambee.

Question: It is now almost three years since you made what is now being considered an extremely important stand in relation to the long term development of the black community. Why did you take this stand?

Answer: We were functioning fairly well, we had a programme of prison visits and we had an educational programme in our hostels. I felt that we needed more development which we decided to give priority to was the ownership of property. Jenkins was then Home Secretary. He sent a Race relations expert to see us and I made it perfectly clear that our development was at a delicate stage and I was not prepared to sit back and let anybody impose conditions that might be counter-productive. We then put in for a quarter of a million capital cost and fifty-five thousand running cost. The Home Office approved the grant but on its way to us, it was strangled by the Borough Council, who sent to tell us that they would be holding the Deeds of Property bought with the grant.

The capital grant was for purchasing and equipping buildings. I had several meetings with them and explained that they were not in a position to hold the Deeds of the buildings. The Council's response was that that was an extremist view. I told them that I was not prepared to accept that my view was extremist and my insistence that the Deeds should be held by Harambee resulted in them withholding the capital grant. I drew to their attention the possibility of the National Front gaining power and asked them what would be the plight of young black people should this occur.

Question: What do you consider to be the fundamental difference between your approach and the approach of others like Oscar Abrahams of Keswidee and Pastor Morris. Why is Harambee singled out for pressure from the council?

Answer: I think the council and other agencies were very happy with our visiting the prisons and our hostel work, our liaison with the police and the social services, but their attitudes changed when we moved into education. For example, we bought books by Martin Luther King and other black writers like George Jackson, Eldridge Cleaver and Hughie Newton. Now the first reaction we had to this came from a Harringay youth officer who, after visiting Harambee said that the books were revolutionary and that the display was about revolution. I explained to him that Martin Luther King was a most passive philosopher and that I hoped he understood what that meant to young black kids, and there was no way that these kids should be robbed of these experiences. I think that if you look at what is going on in this country the authorities are quite happy for an organization to engage in a few prison visits and a few hostels to be set up, for playgroups which provide our kids with nothing more than playing dominos and table tennis. I think when it comes to what Fanon called "uplifting those black kids out of their intellectual backwardness" we will always run into trouble with the authorities.

The question of demanding that we should hold the Deeds to the property will mean that in years to come our black community won't have to start all over again, it will provide the stability that will encourage growth. It will also give us the independence and self-respect that is desperately needed in our community. For example, if the Town Clerk wants to visit us he would have to phone and make an appointment it would not be a case where they can just walk in and out as it

pleases them. To really answer the question the difference Harambee and Keswidee and the Morris set up, is that in the Pastor Morris he has white as his committee. We have been that, discovered the difficulty involved and cut that out. Keswidee totally different development since they cater for people interested in the theatre, they need all and any to come and see their shows. Our development is concerned with welfare and education of the youth and do not feel it is necessary to have a lot of people floating around them.

Question: Given that you did receive any funds how were you to pay this back?

Answer: Contributions from black barristers and solicitors and private persons enabled us to cover the overdraft. What is interesting later I went back to the bank and asked for a further overdraft of a Thousand Pounds only to be told by the manager that he had been told not to provide the credit. I was absolutely certain that the bank was not evil enough to deny black children their educational visits and welfare privileges, wrong. They were evil enough. I had been with this bank for years and had a good relation with the Manager, yet that did not stop me then deciding that the only way to do was to carry on with the voluntary help we could get to the community. We held a series of parties aimed at fund raising.

Some weeks after the last time we received a summons from the Council of Environment for a public nuisance by making Harambee was taken to court. Trustee and myself were fined of seven hundred pounds. We and the Judge cut the fine to five hundred pounds. According to the Judge we could not interfere with the we had to pay that which amounted to five hundred pounds. At the time the Judge stated that that should be paid out of public money went to court one day to this out and the next day Pentonville Prison doing so. No consideration was given to that there were kids at Harambee who looked after. One day last week bailiffs came with a warrant went upstairs and broke down the doors, took away school typewriter and the chairs they were using. This I later discovered over a matter of rates. What

covered was that certain projects were given rate exemptions whilst we were not even given the 50% exemption allowed to charities. Added to this we had Officers of the Islington Council meeting youths in the street telling them that they were giving Brother Herman a lot of money. One day one of our Trustee's Rev. Wood was in court. Not knowing who he was a Harringay Councillor came up to him and said that the Council is giving Brother Herman lots of money. This was remarkable evidence of the way the States divide and rule machinery operates, for Rev. Wood was amongst others who advised me to stand on the principle of demanding that the Deeds be held by Harambee and was therefore well aware of the councils actions in relation to withholding the grant.

Question: Having lost out on the Capital costs you still had substantial Running costs, were you able to make use of that?

Answer: The Town Clerk argued that the Running costs had to follow the Capital costs, which is to say we first had to purchase the buildings after which they would release the running costs. This meant that having withheld the Capital costs they would automatically hold the Running costs. They even went beyond this. They insisted that we should have Planning Permission before any monies were released. I told them that this was stupid in the sense that their powers were so total that in order to justify their first actions all they needed to do was to refuse all our applications for Planning permission. At this time they were funding us for a single hostel while in fact we were operating three hostels. We continued like this for one year. In the second year we were given a form stating certain conditions among which were that no member of my family should be on the management committee. They also indicated that they wanted to come in at any time and inspect the accounts. I objected and told them that an annual statement of accounts were all we were prepared to provide. The Town Clerk remarked to me that everyone else had signed this form and if I didn't they would stop all monies. I subsequently read in the newspaper, remarks by Councillor Anne Page which suggested that I must fall in line or have my hands withdrawn. They said that Oscar Abrahams of The Keskidee had signed. I contacted him and he said he had not. I later had the Town Clerk confirm that Oscar had not really signed but had promised to do so. The Town Clerk said that he knew that Oscar

would eventually sign but felt that I would object and so insisted on my signing now. It is at this point that I decided to stand up for dignity, self-respect and integrity. I refused to sign. I then went to the bank and was successful in obtaining an overdraft for Three Thousand Pounds which was eventually paid back.

Question: It has been widely spread about that the money which was once allocated to Harambee has since been shared among other black organizations in the area, what do you think of that development?

Answer: First of all it is common knowledge that our community suffers from severe poverty, it is also common knowledge that the best method of control is to divide and rule, playing one off against the other. Councillor Anne Page actually wrote in the newspaper that Brother Herman is stubborn but that there are lots of other groups that she can get to take the money. What she actually did was to talk to these groups about the quarter of a million pounds however I understand that of that vast sum of money £23,000 went to Keskidee, Pastor Morris got £1,000 and a group called Carnival Eighteen also got some money. A womens group that was offered £1,000 returned it. My argument is that now is the time for us to make fundamental sacrifices in terms of self-respect and dignity. It is quite obvious that to make these sacrifices we must be prepared to suffer. We must always remember that white society is well aware of our poverty and will seize any opportunity to divide and rule us.

Question: A while ago you mentioned suffering, how have you and Harambee been able to survive these past years without funds?

Answer: Obviously we have no money, as I mentioned earlier we owe money for rates and electricity and gas. We have a black brother with a shop and he will allow our food bill to go to £500; We sometimes get small donations from people like you and this helps us in paying fares when travelling around.

Question: It would seem to me that although many people agree with the stand that you took there are some who suggest that you went about it the wrong way. Do you have any regrets?

Answer: I think that the decision wasn't harsh enough, I think it wasn't quick enough, I think that there was no other way since the other possible way is one in which we would be unable to make decisions. Because of our historical position it would seem as

though we are afraid to make decisions. Often when we make decisions we seem to say what would the white people think about that? rather than what the black people think. I remember I once remarked to the Town Clerk "you keep telling me about the white backlash what about the black backlash". Those people who are saying that I went about it the wrong way are not taking the black community seriously for it would seem to me that the way they want me to go about it is the way that suits the state. Again I say I have no regrets, I am proud and convinced that I made the right decision.

Question: I understand that you have taken the Islington Council to court, while I appreciate that there is not a lot you can tell me about the details can you tell me your reasons for doing so?

Answer: First of all, there are lots of legal complications. Having decided to give us the money they then suggested that we should set up a trust within a trust. We found that that was illegal but even so we were prepared to go along with them. However when the time came to finalize this they started playing a lot of games and nothing happened. We didn't just take the Council to court for the Judge to say that we are right, that is not our priority, our priority is that we must protect our community from the racist attitudes of white society which assumes that it should dictate to us. The reason for taking the Islington Council to court is to demonstrate to this society that we are not prepared to have them dictate to us.

If you look at the civil rights movement in America you will see that in spite of the fact that Martin Luther King understood the racism in the judiciary he still took his white oppressor's to the racist judge.

Question: What is your specific reason for taking them to court?

Answer: We argue that the money allocated to Harambee was 75% Home Office money, the Islington Council then became Trustee's of that money and they must now prove why they have refused to release that money to Harambee. The reason that we are taking them on the Capital costs as against the running costs, is that the question of the Capital costs are less complicated than the running costs. We shall however be taking them up on the running costs in due course.

Question: As you know most funding bodies set down criteria for the funds that they ultimately will or will not provide, what effect does this have on you?

this has on black organizations?

Answer: I have seen the dilemma long ago and I went to establishments like The Jamacia High Commission and asked what can you do to give our brothers some stability? I really think that to overcome this problem we are going to have to call on the black people in America, in the Caribbean and even in the Arab world for their support. I also feel that if a few more of the brothers take the stand that I have taken we would all be a lot better off. Ultimately it will force governments into understanding that they cannot do the work that we do and if they understand that then they will respect our work. I am saying that funds allocated to black groups should be put into the bank at the beginning of every financial year, I am not saying that we should not account for it, sure we must account for it.

Question: Following on the lean years, not only in the sense of lack of funds but also in lack of support, there appears to be a new understanding of the position that you took three years ago. Do you think that we are moving into a new phase, do you think our people are becoming more aware of the importance of long term planning?

Answer: Yes, I believe that the young people in particular are into the idea of long term planning. After we have held the strain for so long it has enabled the black community to become more aware of the importance of the stand we took.

Question: Finally what do you think of the future of the Black institution in this country?

Answer: I think there is a way forward but it must come from us, everything must come from us.

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ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

It is quite normal for the authority of the black community and its leadership to be undermined by government and the media because of the pervasive nature of racialism in British society. But over the past two decades the postures of the black community have changed from the general race relations talk shops to community development; a practical response to the general needs of the black community, and in particular the needs of its young.

Black institutions come and go and there still remains the conflict between the ideological political wizards whose untiring radicalism, often couched in the language of academia in search for a 'coming society' with the same zeal and promise of Christian eschatology; and the pragmatists who recognize and have established a place for themselves within the general framework of the voluntary self-help movements, through largely dependent on financial resources from Trusts, Foundations, local and national government.

Black institutions tend to evolve charismatic personalities whose flair, honesty, acceptability and character acts as a prime characteristic of a position response from financial institutions, local and national government. Unity Association is one such institution with a chequered history. It is one of the most imaginative black community development projects with public and private sector activity, all very much the brain-child of Anthony Sealy an energetic Barbadian — sportsman, journalist, community worker, whose shrewdness, cunning and multiple skills have modelled a pilot scheme which has its pivot, private sector activity which would reduce the begging bowl activity of black institutions. Self-help would be self reliance in every conceivable way.

Now a crisis has arisen in North Kensington, more important than the ripple effects at the annual Notting Hill Carnival street celebration, for it is about the quality of leadership in the black community and the development of black institutions generally.

Unity was preceded by the Dashiki Project, founded and developed by Vince Hines, of the now Vince Hines Foundation. The project came to a sad end due to the involvement of some sectors of the Black Peoples Information Centre and consequently, the matter died from the agenda of the black community at the Royal Courts

of Justice, Strand. Those responsible for ousting Vince Hines from office have not displayed the capability of running the much needed institution of care for young black people, who may have been in trouble with the law, have had difficulties with their parents or had been foiled by the education system. The Dashiki dispute was resolved largely by innuendo and muscle power. The principle of removal by force and brandishing of muscle power as a means of resolving important disputes does not offer to the young any constructive models of negotiating. Brick throwing, fist to fists, knife flashing and volleys of expletives will fail to mould good character.

Dashiki was killed by political idealists who may well be accused of using young black people as political pawns.

Tony Sealy was employed by the Notting Hill Housing Trust in 1972. There he highlighted the need for multiple provision for young people. He suggested the setting up of a project to function from two short life properties. The plan went something like this:

Basement: recreational amenities, (club house, providing facilities for table tennis, weight lifting, boxing, chess, darts etc. parties, dances - a cultural venue -

Ground floor: pilot scheme for youth-workshop, handicrafts, interior decorating, cooking, setting up of job placement scheme in order to assist young people find suitable employment.

Remainder of house: the provision of hotel accommodation.

It was quite obvious to any casual observer that there were large numbers of young black people in betting shops or standing aimlessly round the streets - social rejects of society.

In November 1973 it was rumoured that the Notting Hill Housing Trust had given a house to the then Chairman of the Carnival Committee, Leslie Palmer. Following this, several persons called for a meeting with the Housing Trust which was subsequently held on 4 December, 1973 at the Metro Youth Club. It was agreed to set up a project on the lines outlined by Tony Sealy and that the Committee should be comprised of one representative from each black organisation in the area. The resignations of Tony Sealy, Herbert Bukhari, Tony Soares and Rothwell Kentish soon followed because of the alleged ill-will displayed by Rhodan Gordan of the BPIC.

By December 1975 The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea had decided to suspend dealings with Unity Association for one year. A charity which had given £7,000 requested the return of its finances.

It was in February 1976 that Sealy was asked to take on the task of co-ordinator for Unity Association.

Unity Association consisted of two derelict houses at 90-92 Lancaster Road, W11 which the Notting Hill Housing Trust had allocated to the project, and because of disputes at the time threatened to take back their properties.

There was an abundance of good will from several individuals in the black community and support from the Action Resource Centre and as a consequence Sealy was able to set up office.

UNITY'S ACHIEVEMENTS

Tony Sealy's track record in Unity is unique given the problems which existed when he took up office. He harnessed the financial resources of local government, national governments private enterprise.

What Unity Association achieved in three years under his direction:

Unity House: The quantity surveyor estimated a conversion cost in the sum of £65,000 for 90 and 92 Lancaster Road. The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea offered £28,000. With the latter sum work was undertaken resulting in 18 units of accommodation, incorporating a small Education Unit.

Bay 45. This development is situated under the West Way Motorway and consists of a restaurant, supermarket, record/book shop, centre for West Indian handicraft and offices.

Bay 67. Work is due to start shortly on this development site to provide a school for commercial studies and a number of workshops.

Housing Provision: In addition to the eighteen units of accommodation provided at Unity House, the Notting Hill Housing Trust and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea allocates a number of flats to Unity Association. This enables the young people to live independently in normal housing stock. The Paddington Churches has also made a property available and the Association. Furthermore Unity is awaiting confirmation from the Housing Corporation regarding registration as a Housing Association.

One of the unique features of Unity's development is the way in which it succeeded in providing employment for young people living at Unity House, who would otherwise be unemployed. Some of them insisted in the building programme of the whole complex.

What is the crisis

Only folly would lead anyone to be critical of Sealy's achievements. Whatever brainstorm he may have had, have been placed on an architects drawing board and now stands in bricks and mortar, and the Unity Association functions with a Management Committee which came to prominence in recent months. There has been much rumour mongering about Sealy's "inability to delegate responsibility, to carry out the instructions of the Management Committee and his personality," but as the saying goes — 'he who is without sin, cast the first stone'.

It would appear that the involvement of the BPIC in community politics is worthy of some analysis but not here. Suffice it to say that its involvement with Dashiki is well known to all, and so with the Metro Youth Club, a facility of ILEA which functioned for a long time under BPIC's influence, and many activities under its sponsorship. Unity Association's Chairman Cecil Gutzmore is reported to have said recently, 'looking back it would have been better to have left Dashiki alone'.

If the association of BPIC with some black projects results in less provision for the young one must ask the question whether such provision is needed or whether there are political undercurrents in BPIC which have more to do with political ideology and talk, than any serious attempts to resolve some of the damage done to the 'black personality' by the State.

Black institutions in North Kensington, the Metro Youth Club, Mangrove Restaurant, Unity Association, BPIC and Carnival Committee have become black shrines of 'agrophobia' with a legacy dating back to the symbolic Notting Hill race riots in the late 1950's. Pilgrims come annually to the area to pay homage to those who profess to be or are assumed to be the 'leaders' in the community.

The quality of leadership is seldom questioned despite the general high mortality rate of black projects and failure being the black community's greatest success.

Now back to the real issues.

Tony Sealy resigned from Unity primarily as a result of the attitude of Rhodan Gordon which has been largely compounded by other members of the management committee. The

weight of responsibility for whatever has been and has been left unresolved rests with the Chairman, Cecil Gutzmore who failed to use his authority to resolve the issue. Of course, one understands the difficult position in which he finds himself. He is a worker at BPIC, thus an employee of Rhodan Gordon, and despite how objective professional workers should be, there is a tendency sometimes to be loyal to associates.

The real issue is to do with the management of Unity Association and not simply the personality conflict between Gordon or Sealy, although this appears to be the most symptomatic contributory factor to incidents which have taken place over the past months. It is too simplistic to suggest by implication that it is simply a matter of personality conflict, for to do this would distort some of the structural features of Unity Association which should be attended to by management. For example, no annual general meetings have been held since Unity's establishment three years ago. The caretaker committee has conducted the business of Unity as if by divine right, and the provision for up to fifty members under Unity's constitution has not been promoted and one could go on.

Sometime last year Unity's Secretary, Gloria Cummings wrote a letter to the Chairman outlining some of the problems facing the Association.

She said "The problems as I see them are, Rhodan Gordon imagines that there are very serious defects in the running of Unity which rests solely with the Director. These have never been stated in a fashion which would enable the Committee to talk through or act on them. I feel that the behaviour of this member of the Committee has caused some very inflammatory situations to arise, and left to fester. I feel you as Chairman must do all in your power to put a stop to this attack. This member has also got involved in many situations way beyond the brief of Committee members."

"When Tony Sealy was appointed as Director, he was given a mammoth task to perform by the Management Committee. He has performed these tasks above and beyond what we as a management Committee could have hoped for, but nevertheless he is treated with suspicion and not understanding. He is judged on his personality rather than on his achievements and commitments.

This is very unfair, for whatever else we would like to say, we cannot say that he has not done the job. We seem to expect absolute respect from him, when we fail to give a little respect to him for the things he has done on our behalf."

"What should be the role of the Director? He should be able to keep control of the day to day situation of Unity with our support but not of interference. As Senior worker he must be able to guide, advise, correct discipline other members of Staff without interference from the Management Committee. He must also keep the Committee informed of the progress, setbacks, ups and downs of the Organisation, as well maintain the development of the organisation as he sees and hopefully as we want it. He must be able to maintain control of the situation in the House with the help and support of other Staff. This can only be achieved if he is allowed to exercise his full right as Senior Worker without intervention from the Committee, or individual members.

"What has evolved as the role of the Director? He has become ineffective. He cannot guide, advise, correct discipline other workers for fear of reprisals, this is a very sad state of affairs. For every compromise he has made opens the door for another advantage to be taken. Why should he be allowed to continue? Why is it that staff feel it necessary to seek individual Committee Members to discuss matters which really are Staff concerns? This cannot be allowed to continue. Either we accept the role of the Director, or we reject that role and the Management Committee do the job. The latter suggestion I am sure you will agree can never work. It is not the business of the Management Committee to get involved on an ad hoc basis. The forum for presenting such concerns is the Management Committee meeting. The resolving of the day to day problems is for the staff at their staff meetings. If this forum does not work only then should Management be involved."

The Secretary made many comments about the performance, ability and attitude of some members of staff. Some too personal, and therefore for legal reasons cannot be mentioned here. What is clear is that the 'business of Unity' was given little priority at meetings. The Secretary stated — that without the proper use of the forum open to management 'we will be constantly finding ourselves in the realms of gossip and fantasy.' She further said, 'Management has for a long time accepted that it has no policy. We should explore what we mean by policy and proceed to formulate it. I think we should clarify our aims and objectives.'

And where do we go from here?

Black institutions are of the utmost priority to a generation of young black people whose needs may be best met by such institutions. But anything which falls short of excellence and which projects stereotypes of non-achievement must be questioned. We should not set double standards. The demands we make on white society for respect is something we should exercise to our own.

Time will tell the future of Unity. If it should become a lame duck because of Tony Sealy's departure it will be part of the legacy of non-achievement. But with Unity the finger can only be a pointer to the quality of leadership in the black community.

By Louis Chase

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And yet in modern Guyanese society very little of this knowledge or acted on and, as elsewhere, women, despite numbering men seven to one, tend to remain objects of fri and pleasure, as Guyana's most popular institution, the cal constantly reminds us.

Burham himself in his 1975 New Year D speech agreed women are not yet given the opportunity to "serve and c bute to the maximum. . . not only does this run counter t belief in our thrust towards an egalitarian society, but i contributes an almost criminal waste of some of our finest h resources".

WOMEN IN GUYANA

By Angela Cobbina

Situated along a busy road in Georgetown, Guyana, are the headquarters of the Womens Revolutionary Socialist Movement, a powerful sounding name which will certainly stir the imagination of the outsider. But to the regular, the WRSM is just an everyday facet of Guyana's leap into Socialism.

The WRSM was founded in 1957 but was then known as the Women's Auxilliary of the People's National Congress, the party present in power under Priminister Forbes Burnham.

It was originally created to look after the welfare of the PNC members, particularly the youngsters and the old folk. But the women in it quickly showed that they were cut out for much more than social work and proved to be the most active campaigners in both the party and in the country's drive towards independence.

Very soon the Women's Auxilliary acquired such leadership and stature, that it could assert itself as a political force in it's own right. Almost twenty years later, by which time the PNC had been in power for ten years, it was formed into the WRSM with its own programme and constitution to contribute to the country's transition from plantation colony to cooperative Socialist Republic.

In fact, it was Viola Burnham, the Prime Minister's wife, who actively campaigned for a Women's movement within the party and became its national chairwoman.

The WRSM now has 76 district headquarters, with eight in Georgetown itself and basically it aims to raise the political consciousness of women in a country which is in a tense effort to liberate itself from colonial bonds, which has become a way of life in the caribbean.

Its broadsheet of aims and objectives are therefore universal to the women's movement but are also intrinsic to the development of Guyana itself.

To promote the full participation of women in all phases of community and national life.

To work towards the promotion of better opportunities for women and their increased economic status.

To give all possible assistance to the social, economic and cultural development of the country.

To inculcate in children the spirit of loyalty to the nation.

Viola Burnham, as representative speaker of the WRSM in international Womens year, Mexico 1975, succinctly summed up its role in Guyana's revolutionary process: "The struggle for the liberation of women", she said, "must be part of the struggle for the liberation of her country. These two struggles cannot be seperated; they must be waged so that neither struggled is achieved at the expense of the other. She also pointed out that Guyanese women had a tradition of militancy in the fight against their colonial masters - one instance the Buxton Women who stopped the train. "We are constantly reminding our women" she said, "of our time when most of their grandmothers were working side by side with the menfolk on the sugar plantations and in the rice fields in the blistering sun.

Comrade (as everyone is addressed in Guyana) Faustina Osb a worker at the Kitty WRSM HQ and she explained how movement was achieving its objective of improving the stat women in Guyana. "We have several programmes in actio cluding training courses for women in non-traditional skills driving light and heavy duty vehicles, masonry, plumbing, l laying, carpentry and so on. With these abilities, women c least, fully participate in several of our most importan operative projects, particularly in our housing scher "Another important aspect of our work", she continued "ar markets where the women can sell the goods they produce local drinks, preserves and clothes. The markets provide in for both the movement and the women themselves,

Tie Die clothes, designed in African styles have become the most popular items on sale in these markets - the end of Guyana's embryonic cotton industry, which also satis nations cultural drive. The women make them at the HQ Comrade Osborn points out, they would otherwise prob unemployed and housebound. Said Faustina, "We do not the idea that women have to go out to work. Many wom very good reasons for staying at home but this does ne that they cannot contribute to home finances. Our probl not the same as those in the West. True our women are on as brainless, or at least often only capable of child reat house-minding, but our difficulties are very basic and really be separated from those of the country in general why a lot of our teaching is directly involved with the home economics, nutrition, family life, family planning a rearing. We also have a young developers programme, w our youngsters ready for the new society they will grow

The WRSM embraces Guyana's most important princip reliance and co-operation and in doing so, works hand with the PNC's other organisations such as the Young Movement (YSM) and Guyana National Service (GNS).

The PNC, as a direct result of WRSM campaigning, ha duced a state paper on the equality of women which remove from the statute book all laws which discriminat women. Maternity benefits have also been increased and legislation that a man must contribute a stipulated amou income to the upkeep of his child, whether legitimate o pain or a fine or even imprisonment. Equal pay, eligi married women in all sections of public service, strict rape, availability of abortion and contraception can also unde the government's effort to improve the status of Yet all the same, a visitor to Guyana, who has never hea WRSM may get an entirely different impression immediately struck by the famedness of so many of th and the shadowy position they seem to occupy in t society. In fact their militancy often seems to stop at c ing vociferously at the waywardness of their menfolk, s which they have plenty of opportunity to do becaus numerical predominance of women, men have the op to drop seed' as far and wide as possible. Even these talk passionately about the ideals of socialism and equa to become very reactionary when it comes to the qu women. It is a fact, that in Guyana today, the only wo can have more than one man, or walk into a rum-shop i drink, or go to a club unaccompanied by a man, or otherwise she is considered only worth knowing for a g Nor has the government made any attempts to curb pr and the two well known whorehouses 'Oxford and Universities' are still going strong. Whilst the PNC television as encouraging bad habits, it still allows films to be shown in cinemas.

This contradictory attitude towards women is best summed up by the following quotes from two PNC publications. 'In the Guyana Defence Force's Green Beret' Comrade Shirley Field-Ridley, minister of information and Culture, says "I recall, while in Cuba, seeing a picture showing a female in uniform with a rifle in one hand and a baby in the other. This clearly shows how many ability and endurance a woman has". And a writer in Sugar News, the paper of the Guyana Sugar Corporation states "Whilst there was a sugar shortage, it shocked me to see women fighting and squabbling over sugar and it seems these days women have forgotten how to be feminine".

Despite the existence of the WRSM, which is impressive in itself, Guyanese society is still very much a man's world, which may only acknowledge the WRSM because it tows the party line. It is those women who have dismissed their wayward husbands and set up homes by themselves and their children who cause the greatest alarm and it is here where the real revolution is beginning.

Matches, scratches. . .
Cigarettes, pigarettes,
Imatation turnoff.

Limitation strife,
Foriegn life, foriegn wife
Good or bad
Glad or sad.

Oppression withun oppression
Pollution within pollotution
For the herb of peace
I get the herb of Hell-fire.
Gar-ci — (myling) Gar.
Choke nose,
Choke throat,
Choke lung,
Choke life
Who is illegal?

The Ganga. . . wild. . . 3/4 of Earth.

Or the Governments (West)
Who tell the 3/4 Earth not to
renerate itself?

Contradiction of truth
Is hypocritical lies,

So let the children
Know the truth.

It is better for you
If you only but knew.

Imitation

Foreign foreign Anwar

79.



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KINGFISHERS - A SOURCE OF BLACK TALENT

By Don Kinch

Up to about three years ago, for those of us who were keen enough or found ourselves with nothing better to do at ten o'clock on a Saturday evening or about two o'clock on a Sunday afternoon and switched on the television to watch match of the day on B.B.C. or the Big Match on I.T.V. it was very unlikely that we would have seen a pair of black legs running down any of those footballs, being kicked around in various League matches up and down the country. Apart from the token gesture made by West Ham in bringing Clyde Best from Bermuda and letting Ade Coker stretch his legs occasionally, the English football scene was just another reflection of the racism inherent in the British institutions and the black footballer was blatantly ignored and left to display his talents in Adventure playgrounds, Youth clubs and the local parks on Saturdays and Sunday mornings.

Having watched England failing to qualify for the world cup, since winning it back in 1966 and Peru shattering Scotlands illusions in the last one, we all knew that the whole of British football would have benefited tremendously, from the inclusion of the mass of black footballing talent around, just as some of the league clubs are now benefitting from the presence of their black footballers. But does this mean that British football has had a change of heart or attitude towards the black player? No, I don't believe that is the case. My belief is that the English football clubs did not have the choice and if we look at them, we will see that they were either in the lower ranks of the divisions or they were too poor to spend money on the usual tired, over-estimated white players and so, logically they turned to the black players, which cost them virtually nothing. It is significant also, that although the majority of the Black players, who have now made their mark, are from London, none of the London clubs have been able to find a place for them in their teams. If they have not already started their decline into the lower divisions, it will only be a question of time before they begin to pay the price, in the same way that the National team will pay the price, if they continue to ignore the black talent surrounding them. I can stick my neck out here and say, that unless the English team is made up of about four or five black players, during the next world cup, they will fail to qualify yet again.

The English football hierarchy is in a very unique position, in as much as they have good support at a local level, in the various leagues and particularly at Youth Club level. They do not have to look very far. One such place, is Kingfishers Youth Club at Braincroft School, N.W.2. During a history, which goes back to 1954, the club has gone through a number of changes, which is also a good reflection of the changes, which have taken place in the catchment areas, over the same period of time. Over this time, the make up of the club has gone from being of a local grammar School membership to being what is now and all black club. The transformation was complete when Winston Gayle came to the club as a part time worker. As coach and organiser of the football team, Winston has watched his boys, lose all four matches in four years.



They have won every competition, they were enter for. The cups, medals and trophies decorate the shelves of the club. As a club, they provide a source of talent for any football scout. Already, Luther Blisset of Wford, Ricky Hill of Luton and for a while Cyrille Redden of West Brom. have all passed through their ranks.

In addition, to the football teams, the club is also running a very successful cricket team, table tennis team and are contemplating developing other activities, such as pool, darts and table football and from the evidence visible in the club, they possess a number of very capable individuals.

The club has developed very much along the lines of sport and recreation. This provision was more than adequate at a time when the composition of the area and opportunities for youth, were such, which allowed the members to pursue specific activities. However changes in the area, combined with changes in the society, do not allow for any such luxury. The youths, who now make up the membership of the club, are the type who do not find it easy to get jobs, the ones who have left school without an adequate education and then look to the leadership for answers to all their frustrations. The leaders are all aware of the need to introduce a new programme of activities and have tried to develop educational programmes as well as sports, such as dance and drama. But unfortunately, with only a pool of part time workers, available only for a few nights a week, lack of finances and inadequate space, those programmes have failed.
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In spite of these very obvious handicaps, the leaders have still managed to do some of the things at various times. At the moment, they are engaged in a massive fund-raising venture. A venture which is designed to take over one hundred young people on an Educational/Recreational trip to Jamaica for six weeks at a cost of £55,000.

The club is run by Dave Spoeri, a white Jamaican, who came to England in 1943 to join the Air Force during the war, along with other West Indians, Cubans and Africans. Dave was immediately put in charge of the group, to look after both their welfare and discipline. He has a number of stories to tell about the experiences of blacks in Britain during those early years. Like the time when, as Dave says, "One of the boys collected his Saturday night pass and went out, while he was out, he met an English family who took him home. When he saw the time was going, he said he had to get back before twelve o'clock." They said, "Don't worry, we'll take you back." So they kept him there until after twelve o'clock. When he finally got back to the base, I listened to them explaining to the Sergeant Major." They said, "Why we kept him there until after twelve o'clock, was because, we understand that after twelve o'clock, his tail would come out."

Being white meant that Dave, escaped a lot of those humiliating situations, experienced by other West Indians and at the same time he enjoyed a number of privileges, denied the black West Indians. But if being white, brought him certain advantages, being a Jamaican did not do the same. Like the time, after leaving the Air Force and finding himself being refused a number of jobs, because he was a Jamaican. These rejections led to him taking up the job as care-taker of Braincroft school and finally starting and running Kingfishers Youth Club ever since 1954.

Mr. Spoeri is now the oldest and longest serving Youth Worker in Brent. At 64, he is due to retire from his job as caretaker of the school next year. At the moment, he is still undecided about whether or not he is going to continue his role at Kingfishers, but if he decides to quit, there is no doubt that his long standing influence and organisational abilities will be greatly missed by the members of Kingfishers.



HEAR AND UNDERSTAND

Living Water

By Doreen

Jesus answered and said unto her,
'Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again,' - St. John. 4.13
Here Jesus was talking about Jacob's well.

In verse 14, he goes on,
'But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him,
shall never thirst again.'

If we interpret this as a simple case of taking and drinking water, then we will have missed the point completely. In biology, we are told that all our actions and thoughts, are first of all, registered in the brain. The simplest act of moving your toe, has to be instructed by the brain, which has a cerebral reducing valve controlling it. So in short, it is from our brain, that all our aspirations, our perception of the world and our energies emerge.

Our brain is our well and as you know, every well has a spring, but if the well is full of junk, then the spring becomes inoperative and no water can come out. The bottom of the well will remain damp. Likewise if our brain is full of junk it cannot function properly. So when Jesus spoke of giving the water, he was obviously not talking about the water, with which we are all familiar. He was talking of the water which replenishes our energies and enlightens us.

Another point which ought to be made, is that, at the time, there was a racial problem — not unlike the problem which confronts us as black people today. Something which has misled us in the past, is that, many of us believed that Jesus brought a new message into the world; hence the "The New Testament". But from the proverbs we find Solomon talking about the same water, which Jesus talked about.

Prov. 18.4 'The words of a man's mouth are as deep waters and the well spring of wisdom as a flowing Brook.'

Chapter 10.11 'The mouth of a righteous man is a well of life.'

Chapter 20.5 'Counsel in the heart of a man is like deep waters; but a man of understanding will draw it out.'

In Job 28.28 'We hear having departed from evil, you become a righteous man.'

So Jesus did not bring a new testament, he simply continued, what could be seen as a protracted struggle of good over evil. But more important, he taught this woman to believe in herself and in her own potential, to search for her strength within herself.

Belief is an emotion, which stirs the mind into action. We as black people do not believe in ourselves. Since our arrival here in the West, we have been taught to see our strengths and weaknesses reflected in others. Doubt also is an emotion. Out of doubt, fear arises. If we doubt we are unsure of something, we become afraid. We have always had doubts about our potential. We have always been afraid of our potential and each other. We have been made to feel guilty as one writer puts it "Keeps the mind in chains" And that is where we are today. We have been made to feel unworthy, even of prayer. Not having a full understanding, we thought that prayer meant being on your knees. To pray on your knees, is no more than a submission to the laws which govern religion. But real prayer, is an awareness of the universe (Some call it meditation).

I find it necessary to point you back to the bible, because I believe it contains a philosophy, which many of us have missed or misinterpreted. Looking at the bible, as many of us have been taught to do, is one thing, reading it and understanding it, is another. As a family, we have no philosophy. We are unable to teach our children who are brought up here, in Britain. We have left them weak and unable to resist the temptations of a hostile culture. I am not saying that we have to go out and fight anyone: but we as a part of the universe and we possess the same potential and power to build, right there within us.

Born in Kingston Jamaica, and was educated in St. Johns College. Appeared in many Revues and Plays, before coming to London to further his studies in Art and Choreography.

Studied Dance and Choreography at the Astaieva School of Dance under the late Mlle. Verishka and joined the Internationally famous Les Ballets Negres, the world's first all black Ballet company, and the first black professional company to be formed in England, with dancers from Ghana, Jamaica, Bermuda, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Trinidad, Glasgow, Liverpool, London, and Cardiff, with Music by Leonard Salzedo, and Decor by Roy Hobdell, a truly representative black group.

As one of the leading dancers, after a short London Season of five weeks at the Twenty Century Theatre he toured with the company the Home Counties on a Wyndham circuit doing Sheffield, Leeds, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Birmingham, Manchester and Cardiff returning to London for a season in the Westend at The Playhouse Theatre.

This was followed by a season at the Champs Elysees Theatre in Paris, after which they toured the rest of France, Switzerland, Denmark, Holland, Sweden and Germany. In Stockholm he won the silver medal at the dance festival. All these countries were visited several times.

He also appeared in many Plays and dance recitals and is internationally known as a Painter and Sculptor and has had many Exhibitions in London. His philosophy on Art is based on the ancient Hindu Dogma which says: "To really understand Art, one must first study the art of movement in the dance, Music to understand, and the interpretation of musical sounds; (he studied the Piano and Violin at College, and now plays the Kalimba, a modern version of an ancient African musical instrument the M'bira) only then can one understand what Art is, and should be.

The interpretation of musical sounds into dance movement is a basic and very African technique, and is used by Richie in his Choreographic patterns. He has done Choreography for numerous dance groups in London, and was Cultural Officer for a well known West Indian Organisation for many years. His giant Masks hanging are a feature of most Cultural events in London and the Home Counties.

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POETRY

THOUGHTS

Many times I reason of building a life
That knoweth not worry nor knoweth not strife
Of when we can be equal in each others eyes
And get to the root where the problem lies
For in a man's heart is where he'll find
Everlasting tranquility and peace of mind
To rid himself of material sorrow
And concentrate on life not for today — for tomorrow.

Many times I reason and often pray
That we will not remain here all the day
God through his wisdom will look and see
That we are in need of a community
Through loving kindness he has called each one
And will not dismiss us till our work be done
So its those who know to show those who don't
And those that will to those that won't.

Many times I reason and often see
The day when we are living in harmony
It's now a good time for us to put aside
Our foolish divisions and so called pride
For if the youths are to look and see
That we are living in disunity
What will we answer when questions arise?
And we see the seriousness in their eyes?

Many times I reason of countless sojourners
And see countless faces without any owners
All going their way contended as well
Some not feeling the burning heat of hell
What about us — are we like they?
Never watching or praying for the live-long day?
Contended with our lot here we could never be
Come let us work together diligently.

Many times I reason of our plight
Of trying to abide by truth and right
The battle is hard but victory is at hand
Let us join hearts together, and possess the land.

God for us has laid up in store
Even better for us he's opened the door
Let us be united of one accord
These unhappy divisions we can't afford.

Many times I reason and pray unto God
Visit us oh Father with thy cleansing rod
And beat us if necessary till we cry
For I this is better than if I die
Our heritage we must by rights defend
Even if it means discarding a friend
But Brothers and Sisters we must respect
Not with high looks or outward stiff neck..

Many times I reason and leave this place
And fly above the firmament to seek his face
I lie down in pastures so soft, so green
And think of our kingdom, peaceful and serene
But through the walls of my meditation
Bursts the dawning of realisation
That some of us through desire may not
Be part of the beautiful picture I've got.

Many times I reason and ask from the heart
That we may all wake up and do our part
It doesn't matter where the wrong lies
The greatest thing is we all realise
Shoulders to the wheel we have a hard task
Only blessing and guidance for us I ask
It is only companionship that will make us fulfil
What from creation has been God's will.

Many times I reason of when the going gets rough
Will we know each other well enough
To overcome the difficulties that lie in wait
For we have the power to decide our own fate
Now is the best time when hearts can be broken
We must be strong and take care of what's spoken
Now is the time when dreams can be shattered
Enough seeds in the past on bag ground has been sown

Many times I reason of sorrow and pain
And wonder of my thoughts are all in vain
Together we have great things to find
And sometimes I wonder if its all in I mind
But we will all wake up for we are called man
And we have overcome tribulations since the world
Its only through progress is sometimes so slow
That many times I reason of things we all know.

By S

LONELINESS

Deep — inner
 Surging to rapture
 An abscess
 Hidden but there
 Festering
 Knaving away
 With throbbing hurt
 Keeping in time with
 The palpitation of the mind
 Eroding
 Stealing
 Forever stealing
 The pleasantries
 Feasting on them itself
 Always forgetting
 To eave some for the host
 In its selfish gluttony
 Bathing away the sun
 With raven black
 Kissing with a vampire's
 Dreaded bite
 Always there
 Yet kept so secret.

Catch my thoughts
 And feel as I feel
 In part existence
 Feel the ferocious pull
 Of consciousness and reality
 Slip into darkness
 And hide forever
 From every ray of light emitted.

In peace — nonentity and infinity
 Just slide back to
 From whence you came
 Back — back
 To non-existence.

Icilda Dunkley

ONCE PICTURE BARBADOS

Ah sequacious rapture
 To sit coolly back
 Against sturdy decorous bark
 And feel a repeated swaying this waying
 That waying
 Following the sleepy slow rhythm lurching witchery
 Bewitched beneath an elysian coconut tree
 Quiet, staying there so near to watch
 Sea waves creep along the shore
 And ravishing the rocks' jutting hard black tongues,
 Or boats, with long, gentle outlasting kisses
 Whipping then spinning
 Wipe in the shifting sand —
 As two love inebriated lovers
 Longing for more
 Beneath manya moon-night

By Irvin

"Black women and men
 seated on overcrowded trains,
 fully unaware
 of their diluted brains
 Drawn by great demand
 across the seas
 to a hostile desert land,
 where inhospitable beings sit,
 with sensational newspaper blindfolds
 sneezing psychosis onto indispensable rags,
 or cheap disposable paper tissues"

By Irvin

BLACK BOMBER

A Shorty Story By JOE BLACKMANN

Never been in the army, and not black either but coffee brown or sepia.

But what is in a name?

It was one of those snowy cold wintry days. The miners were on strike and the railway men working to rule. We managed the bet we could get to the office. Just as I came in and hung up my coat, Alan shouted affectionately "hello Black Bomber". The boys and girls were in stitches and the nickname stuck. The weekend was dull. Tired, fed up and feeling lonely, I went by the bus to Hampstead to see a friend. He was out and so I went to the pub near the park for a pint and to kill time. It was quite empty. I took a sip and sat back relieved and satisfied with myself.

"Mind if I sit here thank you."

Before I could blink, this charming lady was sitting opposite me. She put her handbag, car-key and her glass of campari on the table.

"Cannot remember seeing you around here."

"No, I am a stranger here."

"Where do you come from?"

"Highgate."

"Oh no, I mean where — which part of the world."

"Timbucktu."

"Fascinating."

She told me briefly that she lives just round the corner and is separated from her husband who works on the oil rigs in Scotland.

After two rounds of drinks, she asked me to come with her to her flat. It was well furnished but a bit untidy. The music was good and the cocktail cabinet well stocked. I stuck to lager. She was really high and knocked down whiskey as if she was taking tablets.

Then we danced and what a graceful dancer she was, experienced and debonnaire with an exquisite flair for seduction. She called the tune and directed the whole operation.

When I got dressed and wanted to leave, her whole attitude changed as she seemed to be compulsively picking a quarrel. She blamed me for taking advantage of her loneliness; it was all my fault; after all I did not live up to her expectation and was not a good lover. She even challenged me to prove my manhood. When I declined she got nasty; called me obnoxious names. When she realised that was ineffective, she hit me twice on the cheeks, which really did not hurt much. I stood there smiling and shaking my head. Then she went berserk — punching, kicking and got me with a hard kidney punch. I winced and saw stars. I lost my cool and temper.

I threw a well aimed positive blow to her jaw. She felt it and I heard something crack. Her head shot backwards and she fell on the sofa.

I waited her reactions. None. She was dead.

I sat and said a little prayer, called the police and waited. I was very relieved when I went into the cell and was locked up. Who would like to meet a husband whose wife one has just had sex with and then killed?

Fleet Street had a field day.

No matter how hard some editors tried, the racial overtones cropped up. The five years of manslaughter was reduced when the campaign for civil liberty and other liberal organisations appealed on my behalf, when a retired police chief read reports of the case. He wrote to the judge about the girl's mother.

"She had insatiable appetite for sex, easily enraged when rebuffed, turns aggressive. Fined about four times for causing grievous bodily harm to her lovers, and in two instances almost decapitated two elderly gentlemen who were too scared to prefer charges. Her violent and volatile behaviour is hereditary."

In court the husband did not show much emotion or hostility. Later on he found out the day of my release and sent me a telegram.

"I shall be waiting for you on release on 31."

I was so scared that I did not enjoy breakfast. I went and stood out to join the crowd so that the en husband did not see me.

But this was not to be. I was the one released. I started to walk to the main road to get a bus or to nearly collapsed from fright when a van came in very near me, slowed down and asked if I wanted a lift to the station. When we got there he took off the false moustache and glasses. He was the girl's husband.

I gave up. But instead of looking at the barrel of a gun, he gave me an envelope addressed to :-

'The Black Bomber for
Professional services
gratefully rendered.'

"Now what do you want with

"Don't be silly. Get out. Open the envelope."

I got out, slammed the van door and waited.

He just sped away and left me standing holding the brown envelope. Was it a hoax or just a crank playing with me? I opened the envelope, pulled out the paper in it and a cheque for £2000 payable to Black Bomber drawn on the Her Majesty's Insurance Company.

LETTER FROM AN OLD FRIEND

Joeboy, you were the best thing that ever happened to me. You were strong, kind, considerate and adored me. I knew that; but I had my own plans. Thanks to mother, it worked out perfectly, and I got everything except you, I think.

Joeboy, I had forgotten you until I opened this newspaper and there you were. You have not changed a bit, and suddenly I am sweet sixteen again. I can't remember when we first met. Perhaps it was curiosity. Tall and well built with fuzzy wooly hair and copper-brown complexion, the super sportsman, and darling of the University's girls. Your hands were strong but gentle too. Your lips were sweet, and your gentle kisses uncertain but passionate.

You loved me so very much, I knew it, but I was gluttoned with power — my power over you.

The very sight of me was enough to excite you. A smile or wink, lift of my hand or a simple gesture, could send you sadly away, as with a sharp word. It was my power over you that made it worthwhile, the subterfuge, the lies I had to tell. For you were not quite like us. Dear old mother explained it very pleasantly. "He is a foreigner and though I don't hold anything against him, you know what they say? And he'll only get hurt in the end". It made sense, well in a way, but I was not quite ready to let you go. So we met in secret.

Oh, Joeboy, you were very nice. An angel and knight in technicolour who sometimes held his fork and knife as if they were drum sticks! I was not ashamed of you, but afraid my crowd might see you, and yet a touch of your lips made me want more and more.

It went on for years, our hole in the corner relationship. In summer I had to spend the evenings with the family. My crowd conspired to make me so occupied that my free time was tightly scheduled; yet I always found time for you — my Joeboy. An hour with you seemed like eternity and always made me feel good, warm, desirable and strong. Sometimes, there would be a little twinge of guilt, at the way I was deceiving my parents, and you playing smart with your relations. I knew I was using you and enjoyed the game.

Of course there were awkward moments like the day mother saw me reading the book you lent me, in bed. I shall never forget the look in her eyes, blue and hard like granite.

"He is going to break his own heart, men are such fools" she said and walked out.

During the exams period, we still met. The ruse was to take the dog for a walk, and holding a couple of books. But you were there, waiting silent and faithful and sweet. Our bodies were locked in beautiful embrace; I was soft and yielding and you cautious, protecting me even against myself. Joeboy, they won in the end.

In a very subtle and benign way, their prejudice and indignation broke my heart. Things they said and the TV gave them a lot of ammunition. You were coffee-brown, coloured and a foreigner. You don't belong to me. So they won. I could have fought them, but I could not fight myself. They said it was so often coldly, crudely and spiteful enough to put fear into me. I wanted security, car, diamond rings, semi-detached house, fitted wardrobes and Persian rugs in every room, large garden, etc. Then one night, after one of the most exotic moments in my life, I told you so gently that we were through.

I have found my Mister Right, a rich young man with the right connections and prospects that guarantee security. You could not believe it, and almost cried and tried to persuade me to change my mind. You pleaded with the best logic and rhetoric befitting a diplomat, but I made sure you did not come too near to touch me, because I did not trust myself if you came too near. So you went off with a broken heart and I eventually married my Mister Right. He is English, big blonde, was Captain in the Territorials and played cricket and rugby for the country club. He holds his knife and fork correctly but his kisses are not so hot nor passionate like yours. He is now the Managing Director of the family firm. He drives a Daimler, and I have my own Jaguar automatic. Oh Joeboy, I have got solitaire rings, mink and fox coats, fitted carpets — real Persian and Oriental carpets all through the house. Right now we have no children yet, but trying very hard.

I have not changed much, still pretty and petite with the Lulu looks. It was just by chance that I opened the District Observer, and you were. You were in tails and top hat presenting your credentials... accredited... to the Court of St. James. I wonder if your kisses are still sweet and your hands gentle and strong. Joeboy, damn them all. We could have been happy, despite your colour.

Satisfied so its nothing to do with
you now
Look at their erraneous ways burning
like Faggots
but are they satisfied?
Look at their erraneous ways burning
like Russels
Whatsoever had once never even been
Our sugar-cane fields full of trash
against which scintillated fires dance
billows
fine avaricious fires greedily
licking residues
off pitch black night
or hteir pointless pitiless things
they call their souls.
Look at it all and laugh at them.
While tedious monotony slowly leaks
out
from their disgusting small
festering disease that seldom, if ever,
stiffens from
between their legs.
But you will not see it, as the wind
goes unseen,
yet it is there, how long.
Black, silvery, light-played-upon faces
prepared for bearing pain.
Will you quietly be the embodiment of
all human suffering?
How long?

By Steven Bieno

ME MEMBA WEN

When I walk the streets of these
foreign lands

When I walk the streets of these
foreign lands
And see the ways in which our people
are suffering
Loneliness, disillusionment, frustratio
Then I take a close look at myself
Walking through the fire
And just barely getting singed.
Naturally the mind runs back
Bringing back memories from
back-a-yard.

Bwoy ova yah China man
Talk pash name like shrimp, prawn,
king prawn
Me memba one day we ketch a whole
basket of janga
Me eat so til me have kalic

Ova yah if you na work or a get
dole mony
Yu dead fe hungry
But back a yard we have mango fe
stone dog
Beefy, blackie, velvet, hairy, bombay,
julie, eastindian, terpine, aden,
We have ginep, cane, june plum,
starapple, rose apple, pineapple,
Custard apple, all different kind a apple
We have coconut, peanut, cashew nut,
cashew fruit,
We have banana, guava, ole heap of
fruit nature provides
Dem da place da com een like paradise
Compare to dis yah barrin place yah
Ina winter it so cold
An mek yu miserable
Ina summer de fruit dem green but na
bare nuttin fe eat.

Me memba how life use to be full of fun
Games galore: chebby, hide and find,
dog and bone,
Mother and father, annancy story,
riddle.
We no have time fe feel fed up.
We use to set up chokie, pringe,
sling shot,
All kind a ways we use to tink fe
ketch birds,
White belly, white wing, ball plate,
barble dove, blue quit,
Ground dove, janchewy, woodpecker,
beeny,
De beeny dem smart,
Dem always have a wasp nest hear
dem nest as guard
Have yu heard de story bout beeny
bud and wasp?

Me memba wen we use to go dung a d
poco church,
Bwoy de man dem use to beat de drum
An jump poco revival sweet
Wen dem start sing dis yah song yah!
Read de 89 psalm, read de 89 psalm,
De 24 verse Deuteronomy 10 & 14
Read Matthew 5 & 17,
Revelation 19 & 10,
Read Amost 1st, de second and de 7,
Peter 1 & 21
De prophecy tell us to learn dem to
learn dem to learn dem
De prophecy tell us to learn dem and
keep dem in our minds.
Me memba wen dem hav nine night,
we get fry fish
And hard doh bread, chocolate or
coffee, tea
Yu hear man call som tune from
dem Sankey
Som a sing com wi go dung a
Manuwell Road
Gal and bwoy fe go bruck rock stone,
And Uncle Rufus sen mi dung a river
side fe go hear dem sing
Dem can't sing a tall; de reason why
dem want more rum.
Bwoy dem days de use to sweet.

Me memba wen we use to ena 4 H
Club, (a school)
We use to get bees, pigs, rabbit, fowl,
An all dem ting de fe look after.
One day, more dan all
We a look after de bees so we tek out
som honey fe eat.
One a dem bwoy no mek sure im
smoke off all de bees
Im bite de hony comb wid bees pon da
De bees bite im ina im mout
Im Bawl out WOH, WOH, mi mout,
mi mout,
And spit out de whole a it.

Wen we go all a wood bush we roast
breadfruit an pear,
We eat quava, tinken toe, jimbilan,
Sweet cup, custard apple
So till de whole a dem clide me,
We have: sweet sap, sour sap, sweet cup,
grape fruit, jack fruit, tamarind
Dem we boil jackfruit seed ina
black pan,
Bwoy dem da days use to sweet
Boy me memba wen we use to go
draw boat
We hav dumpling an ackee an salfish
galore
Some a de dumpling dem use to be
so big, we call dem Cog or Cart weel

Den wen man belly full, some a back,
some a front
Pon rope boat ina middle, uy hear de
shell from
Miles away, an wen we want
everybody fe pull
De same way we chant
One, one, one me ninny man
Ohoo!!!
Ole time sinting com back
again Ohoo!!!
Me nah, nah Ohoo!!!

Man a carry boat weh truck can come
pick it up
Rope bus ova before boat reach
roadside

Wen de sound echo more man a run
come help an all yu hear a,
One, one, one me ninny man
Ohoo!!!
Ole time sinting com back agai
Ohoo!!!
Me nah, nah Ohoo!!!

Boy dem da days da use to be sweet
me memba all
Christmas time, we have clapas,
shebum, starlite, JANKONO
Dem dress up pretty, some look like
Cow, some like Horse,
Some like Dragon, dem nock drum a
dance wid dem choppa and spear
Some a we use to fighten fe dem so
stay ina house an peep tru winda,
Who no fraid use to follow dem fe
miles

Boy dem da days da use to be sweet
Man da a England can't even find pl
fe go
Most a de time yu have fe ina house
like mouse
Wen it no too cold it a rain.
Back a yard wen rain start fall
We dis put on som old clothe and g
a mango bush or gone ketch jang
De rain water so warm an nice.

Ova yah man can't mek rain wet de
cause: five minutes later yu start
cough, yu feel chilly,
Baps a cold yu ketch.
If yu no mine sharp it tun ina
pneumonia.

An nung we ova yah de man dem a
treaten we wid repatriation
Little did they know its no threat
to me,
In fact if dem coulda carry out de
threat
I would count it as a blessing
For me dying fe go home
But tings so rough me can't find
me passage
So tell de sa John Crow want fe go
a Lowden
So dem can blow east wind.

Fred Williams

BLACK WATER
(Reflections of my life)

Black water running
Down the post glistening
A race to get down
Yet not knowing
If and when he will return

Black water fortunate are you
That the climb at this time
Paused in moderation
Or you in your prime
Would be frozen to wait
Indefinitely for your release

Move on then Black water
To your designation
Although it seemed that the fact
Of your existence is by your moving

While you are moving
Through the slippery
Through the slimey
Over green molass
Over humps and bumps
You rumps on
Refreshing some
While some meet their doom
No pause for the gloom

Breathe on then Black water
Breathe on

Black water I admire your crash landing
Swooping down then splash
Sending multitudes of offsprings
Bouncing up to fall again
Magnificently reflecting in the sunlight
Creating a showpiece
Like that of a firework display

Black water
I see myself reflecting through you
As if you were an actor
Acting out my life story
Bring on the tears and the glory

I saw you fighting oppositions
Riding over obstacles
Moving on to merge with the masses
Now united now stronger
Preparing to enter another cycle

Frederick Williams

MEDITATION OF ETERNAL REST

This is my place of reside where I lay
my head

As my body lies to slumber and my
soul wonder

In the morn my body may not recover
from its weakness and eventually
return to it's home in the depths of
the earth, known to mankind as the
"land of the dead".

Here even the worms have to survive
for they too desires to live, so that my
weary bones will lie in the earth that
Jah touched with his hands and made
the first man of creation.

So dust to dust, ashes to ashes
no time for wishes
for at the rendezvous
there is nil you can do.

Tekla Mariam

FREEDOM TASTE OF PAIN

Shout out your cry of pain
Don't let it drive you insane
Though you are class as a third
Utter people utter, and let your
voices be heard.

We they say have taken over their
land

But this my people we do not
understand

With their beastly actions they brought
us here

But we the nucleus of Jah did not
despair

We taught them how to live
But our families humiliated is the
gratitude they give.

Today my father is judging them
For the tree they planted with the
evil stem

So for their iniquities they need a coat
Hence it is us they use for their
scape goat

But this my people they know not
For the time is Right and so is their lot.

Oh What a peculiar people they are
Hoping forever to be the star.

How wild are they in their
dreaming illusion

Which in the end will bring their
destruction

But let us have pity on them
oh Almighty Father

So that sins and blemish will our
souls not gather

For already we know who we are,
cause truly we know that
We are the star star star.

Tekla Mariam

CLUB BEVERLY

By Jamilla

My friend Shirley and I
Went to the club Beverly,
Just wanting a mid week look-see
We sat down nursing two cokes
Feeling nice, we told some joke.

Along the aisle a Brethren stood
He looked at us, I thought, GOOD.
Over came he, as bold as brass
"Weh de fiver I man gi you when
it was week 'afore las"
I looked in his eyes, I had to say,
"I never set eyes on you, before
today".

He shouted,
"Harry come here man, just check
the foolishness of dis woman",
You 'member when I slide her
five, food for her youth to keep
them live".
Harry, he then said, "I man did
site you gi her some bread".

I know, I am sure as I can be
These two brethren was the first
time, I see,
Then it clicked, it was a hustle,
Only me being eight stones then
could not Ali shuffle.

Shirley, I whispered, "Come on
we have to run,
For all we know, he may hold a
gun".

My spar, she never hesitate
The two of us soon bolted out
the gate,
When I start to get out of breath
My mind tell me don't stop it
could be my death.

Looking over my shoulder, he
still on my heels, I ready to collapse
Shirley? for all I know she got
caught perhaps.

For it was a moment, where feet
say everyman for himself,
Beside, who will notice you
calling help.

Nearby was a lorry parked, I
crawled underneath,
I hoped and pray he wouldn't see
me in the dark
He passed close by, my heart in
my mouth
As on the pavement I lie.

He passed back again
Cussing every fancy type of cloth

That gal and her fiver didn't
want to part, still,
I good fe laugh over it. If I ever
see her again
A runner like her I want for a
friend.



TRUE SPUNK

By Jamilla

Just then. . . . POP. . . .
A child is born,
Born to what!
A life of shame of scorn.
Ashamed because the Mama
Had to leave the Dad,
Lost to the love. . . that both
of them had had.

Just then. . . there was another
life,
Who is born to a sage, dervish or
Llama
But sure enough He'll get stopped
If there is no money.

As long as life is out there
For free. . . it costs us no money
We all got it lovingly
So let it be just LOVE. . .
it. . . Works. . .

You'll see.

Seize the time. . . .the NOW!
To make your stand
The way is there
For you to get anywhere.

Go into yours
The best way. . . . you can
To help to express
What is your outlet.

LABEL ME NOT

By Jamilla

Suddenly everywhere I go,
Someone bound to say
Who de sister a defend?
If I look up, somewhat blank
Another will assume, I'm thick
Which God, Creed or Rank?

When I say
I just believe, I was created
My Father has it all in hand
He steers me - you - Earth galaxy
Controls life, death,
angels, demons

Some nut then actually deamnd
You Christian, Rasta or what?
What does one say to people
Who loves tag
Putting the Almighty in a niche

Hear me now,
DO NOT PUT NO LABEL ON ME
TO BELIEVE AT ALL IS TO BE
FREE.

On that day, will be no flag
Badge, pins or Medallions
To differentiate Saints from
Sinners

YOU ARE - I AM

By Jamill

You are, I am. . . but we have to,
Live to love
When all man-kind is fighting.
Live to laugh
Though all around is crying.
Live to see
Though who knows to what lev
we're blind.

Live to be kind
Although cruelty is accepted.
Live and be polite
Amidst the hostility.
Live for humanity
As there is life in abundance.
Live with your God
For your temple is purity.

Live striving for
Understanding.
Live Hoping for consanguinity
After all your life was gained
Working for London
Two people dancing too close

ROBE BLACK & ETHNIC ARTS ARCHIVE
GLC
archive name d r o i o

THAT CHRISTMAS EVE'S NIGHT

By Juliana

My eyes peered through the darkness on that chilly Christmas Eve's night for signs of a car. Outside, the sky was an ugly mixture of grey's and blacks, not a star was seen.

The wind in the trees howled mercilessly. Bent branches swayed wildly about, lashing angrily against the earth, destroying the small defenceless plants. The approaching rain rumbled through the nearby woods. Large drops trickled down the window pane.

The rain began to fall on the little country village, the water forming a curtain on the window pane and canalising its way through the earth.

"Why won't they come home?" I thought as I ran to the kitchen to close the window. The laughter of Diana and Nige, my younger sister and brother, echoed all through the whispering rooms. The large oil lamp winked quickly. For a time it looked like it would go out; then the flame brightened. Cuddling the two children, I tried my best to cheer them up. But soon I grew tired, my voice took on a dreary tone, an echo of the weather.

The lightening flashed angrily, but hurriedly, across the shadowed room. Thunder followed drowning for a brief moment, Nige's screams. Liana's grip tightened and she began to whimper. And then the breeze blew out the light. The children became silent with fear. Somewhere the door's hinges were groaning miserably. The mice were making music in the kitchen. Nige and Liana refused to let go off me, with the two of them following closely by, I managed to relight the lamp after a constant hindrance from the breeze.

The hands disappeared and appeared for a time. it disappeared, I feared for its return. I supposed it was the dwen that Al always spoke about. Daddy had said there was no such things as dwens. Still. . . Or maybe it was an escaped convict, as in "Great Expectations". My imagination went haywire. I wished for Mammy's and Daddy's return. How I prayed for their return. I could hear voices making their way towards the house. I looked again and there were no signs of the mysterious hands. I saw the door open slowly - I sat frozen - Mammy and Dad were brudened with parcels and Daddy had brought the Christmas tree lights. I was so engaged with the prettily parcelled presents that I forgot about the hands, until Daddy switched on the tree's lights, and the glow of it fell on the window pane. There again was the mysterious hands.

"The hands have returned." I cried.

"What hands?" asked my father startled at my outburst.

I related the story of the hands to my parents, whose startled expressions lapsed into laughter.

"They are not hands," said my father, "they are leaves, though I must admit they do look like hands."

He opened the window to show me the leaves, but I had become so exhausted from my long watch, that my senses were drifting into unconsciousness.

And so with the cows lowing, cocks crowing, the sharp sweet scent of apples and grapes invading the room, and the crackling of paper, I surrendered to sleep; the echo of my parent's laughter followed me, while the Christmas tree blinked on - off - on - off - on.

CHILDRENS CORNER

TO LISA

Juliana

Look Jane
Where Lee?
Under the table, see
A big black spider be
Bur where Lee?
Look by that leg, see
I can't see Lee.

Look Jane
Where Lee?
Under the chair, see
A big Beetle be
But where Lee?
Under the chair, silly
I can't see Lee.

The bright face
can always be seen
in the morning
High above
in the night
Much closer now
the white ripples appear
in a dark lake
makes a beautiful scene
Man had conquered
this peaceful place
I wonder
if it will be
so peaceful again

TO WIN THIS SHAMEFUL FIGHT

Debbie Jeffries

Christmas has just gone
It was fun while it lasted
I know now
the new year is here
Don't put your hopes too high,
you'll only get hurt
Look at you now
THIS IS YOUR LIFE
You learn from friends
and sort out who they really are
You have not many friends
life won't allow it.
You laugh one day
You cry the next
Until, laughing or crying, does nothing
It means nothing
You look at life as a gamble, a game
you fall and you try again
losing all the time, you try to carry on
until there's nothing left in you
You've lost it all
and have only the air you breathe.
It is a sin to take it away,
when you're sick of trying
You sit down and think, is there really
a life before death
Is there hell or heaven
Must you go on this chamber of torture
You look forward to death
Yet in some ways you are dead already
This is Your Life
It is also mine

Debbie Jeffries

ROOTS

How wicked and spiteful the white
people behaved,
They took the black people to be
their slaves,
They whipped them with canes,
And put them on chains.

KUNTA KINTE was the real one
they hurt,
They whipped him and scolded him
and treated him like dirt.
Grumble, and mumble, the Africans
did moan,
They wanted to go back to their
own home.
Africa's the word they love,
Then they can be free like the
stars above.
But no with the white people they
had to stay,
Until it was their dying day.
Slap, whip from the cane,
The African's are getting beaten,
And have to bear the pain.
At first when they did come,
They had to be sold,
To the crooked white people who
are normally old.

We will fight the white people,
We will not be treated as slaves,
We will not be treated like dirt on the
ground and beasts in caves.
When African's run,
They run bear-foot,
And when you have a child you should
give it a new name like
KIZZY that means stay put.
But in the end,
Africa wins,
So we won't have to stay with the
horrible white sins.
But now back to Africa we are free,
And now where we want to be.

JUDGE AN DE JURY

Me go look fe job,
But me no get none.
Cause de empolya dem
A de judge an de jury.
Dem tek one look pan me
An se dat me black,
So dem say . . .
NO VACANCY. SORRY.
Wid dem sweet taalk,
Dem bad minded an wicked.
A jus wish fire mite bun dong
dem place.
Dem se dat me black,
So dem judge me
Dere an den.
Me no get second chance,
Dem jus judge me,
Sentence me . . . an prosecute me
Rite dere an den.

Anthony Carter 19 years old

THOSE DARK NIGHTS

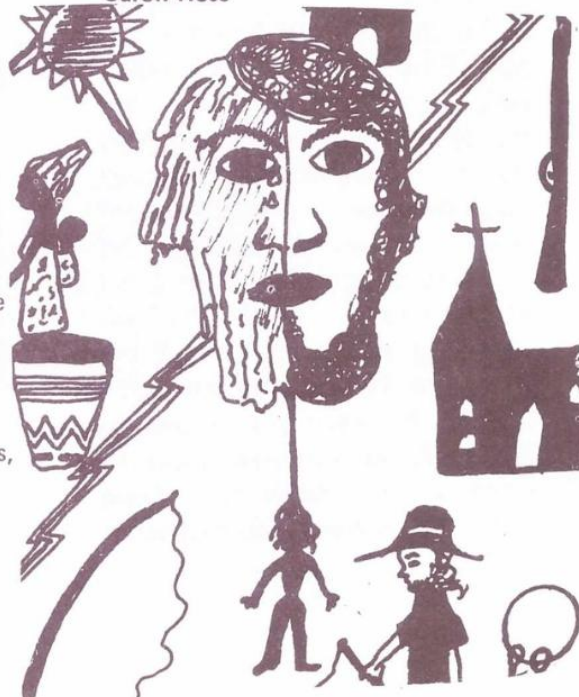
In those dark nights I used to sit alone,
I was scared and cold,
And to myself I'd moan,
Cold and creepy it was in those caves
Why couldn't I be out and about
swimming under the waves.

Then I heard the screaming of lightning
howling like an earthquake,
While everyone was hiding,
I was shivering lonely,
With no one to comfort me,
My life would be dark and scared,
Thats how it'll be.

Nothing to eat nothing to drink,
I'll die of starvation at least
That's what I'll think,
The walls made of stone,
The chair's made of wood.
I'd light my own cave with lamps,
but only if I could.

'Il find my way out of these horrible
caves,
Then I can be free swimming under
the waves,
But now I have to say goodbye and
then I can get out these dark caves,
At least I'll try.

Caron Rose



Caron Rose

REFLECTION

My enemy came nigh,
In a mirror I see.
I stared fiercely in his face
With no pity or grace.
'You are holding me down.'
Not a sound I make
As I wait, just for argument sake.
'No, I'm not your enemy,' he replied.
'Nor am I your friend,
For when all Babylon is dead,
When all arms are laid down,
Your enemy will still be there.
Look closer at the mirror
And tell me, who you see.
You or me?
For whoever you see
That is your enemy.
Not me.

By A. Carter

ANGER

By Jamilla

Eons ago, when earth was but a fresh dew-drop, Ma and Pa had their first dispute. Ma was aged and had to go to sleep. She had given birth to 'Soul', 'Body' and 'Spirit'. Of her three offspring she had control of only 'Body'. Soul was not to be dominated, and to this day is free from its body. Spirit, of the three, is elusive. Even Ma had never beheld this child, to know if it was male or female. And so Spirit was left undisturbed. Soul was always however, in touch with Pa.

One day, Pa told Soul that Ma was going on the journey to the long sleep. Also he said, to restore order in a future world that will become curious of the knowledge of its source, Soul would have to keep guard of Ma's rest.

Soul did not relish the thought of being locked away for an indefinite time, with only his sleeping mother for company. Soul then compromised with Pa. Seeing that he would never be able to procreate, he wished that the body of every child, would live an average of one hundred years and then make its way to Soul for company. Pa considered the request, then after mulling it over in his mind, decided the request was reasonable.

Ma knew she was only moments away from the long journey. She felt only one regret and that was, that Pa would not have to sleep too. If she was able, she would have seen to it that Pa also went with her. But even the great Ma had to respect and abide by the wish of the 'Ultimate One'. Ma made one request that was to see the power of her creation passed on, for the world to be filled. So that one day, whenever she should re-open her eyes, she would behold the issue

of her offspring. Ma beseeched the Ultimate One, to grant her a mater for Body and Soul, so they could have their own companions; when she, herself went on her journey. The Ultimate One directed her the pool of nothing, where she was to fish and find three beings. "Why three, My Lord? I need only two, for I have never beheld a spirit." The Ultimate One, made her realise, that even Spirit would also need a companion.

The first out of the pool of nothing, was Desire. Ma knew she would be just right for her child's Soul though this was not to be. Then came Purity, a rare beauty indeed, followed by Mystery, but she could not see her and so decided to set her free. Ma, went on home with Desire and Purity, to present to her children, Body and Soul. Soul soon discovered he was in love with Purity. He bade her wait for him, until the mission of accompanying his mother's sleep was over. Body, having seen the beauty of Purity, strove to attain her, but she kept herself out of his grasp. He then had to satisfy himself with the beautiful damsel known as 'Desire'.

Pa's mind was absorbed with the fact that he had, in his possession, a sackful of emotions, which should be even distributed to his children. His task was not easy. Emotions are to be handled very carefully and doled out evenly. Laughter and sorrow, should not go to body, as body may not make proper use of them. However, during his moment of decision, the great Ma came to him. He did the foolish thing of hiding the sack behind him, but he was not quick enough. Ma went straight over to the sack, as she was about to open it, Pa forbade her, saying that only he was capable of handling it.

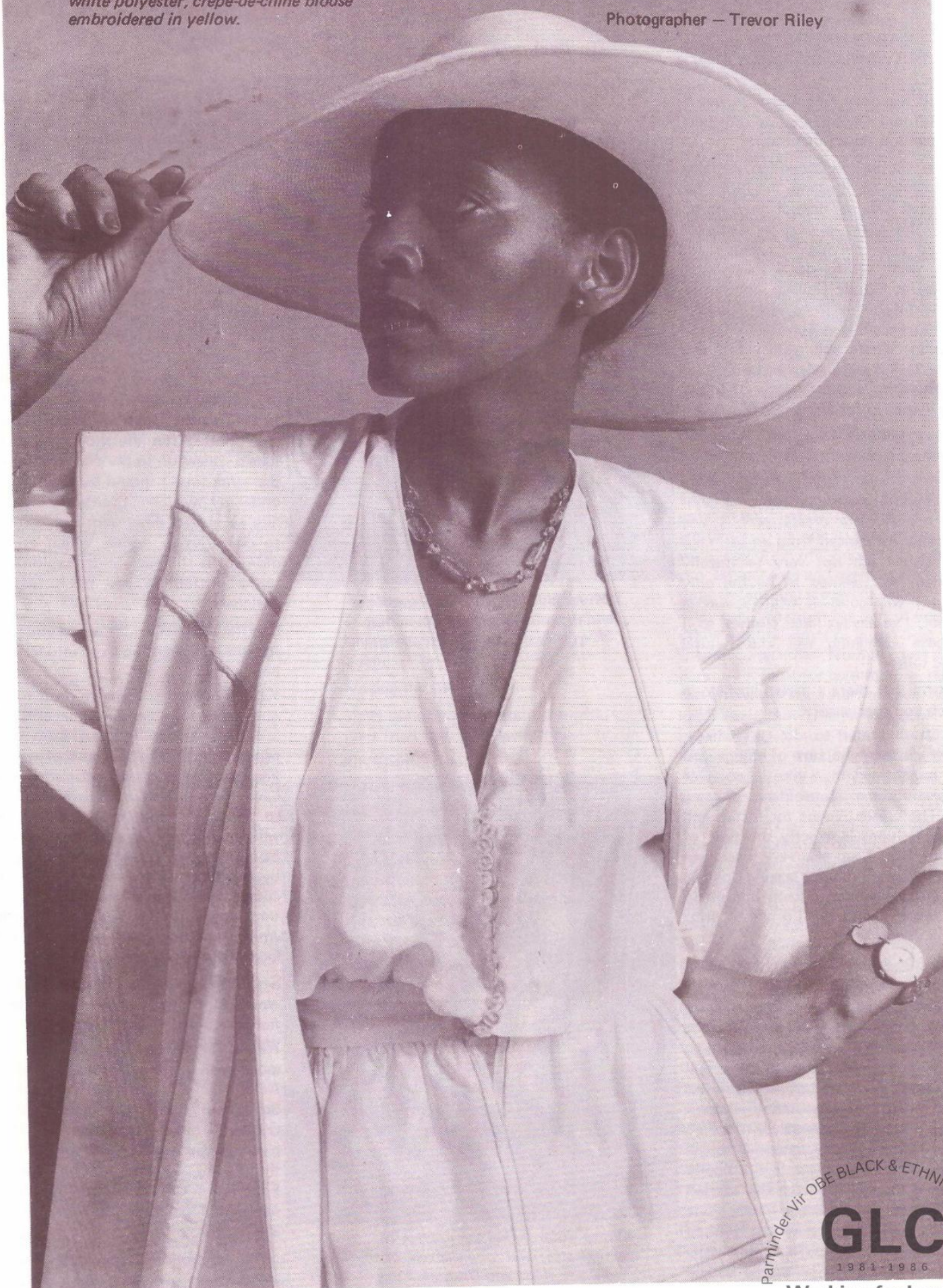
Ma's curiosity got the better of her. She asked. "What's in the sack" and why she could not help to do what was to be done. Pa flatly refused and so Ma proceeded to open the sack. Anger, was first to escape. Pa was able to retrieve the sack from Ma before any other emotions were able to escape. Pa told Ma in no uncertain terms, what the error of her folly would finally cause in future life. He told her, that Anger, knowing no better, would cause needless death, pain and suffering upon the land. He would have to send forth calm to try and subdue Anger. Ma realised, she had done a foolish thing and that night, decided to go on her long sleep. Unfortunately, she never had a chance to warn Body of the dangers of Anger.

To this day anger is the most uncontrollable of all emotions. The one good thing however is constantly being persued by calm, who placates him, but only for a time.

*White moire sleeveless coat, piped
and lined in yellow Satin worn with
white polyester, crepe-de-chine blouse
embroidered in yellow.*

Model — *Shaka*

Photographer — Trevor Riley



KAREN HAMULTON —
INTERVIEWED BY Thelma Allen

In this issue, we take a look at one of our up and coming fashion designers. Her name is Karen Hamilton.

Karen was born in Clarendon, Jamaica. She came to England in 1968 and attended Oakley School in Birmingham, she spent a year in Ladbroke School after moving to London and then went on to do a Foundation Course at Patney College. She has recently finished a three year course in fashion designing at London College of Fashion, where she gained two diplomas in Art and Design and a diploma membership to the Society Of Industrial Artists And Designers (S.I.A.D.).

Staunch: What inspired you to become a fashion designer?

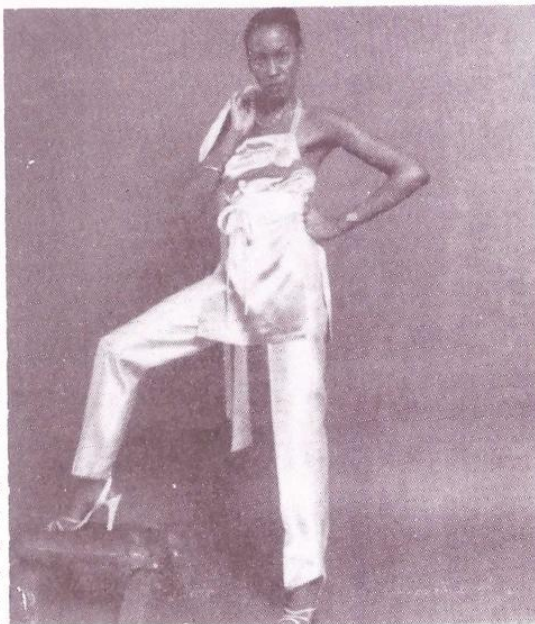
Karen: Coming from a family, where my Grandfather is a professional tailor and my Aunt a dress-maker. I was probably influenced from an early age and also I am not very technically minded, Art seemed to be the only thing I was good at while I was at school, I've always liked clothes, so, I suppose designing was the natural thing to do.

Staunch: Is there a particular field in which you specialise?

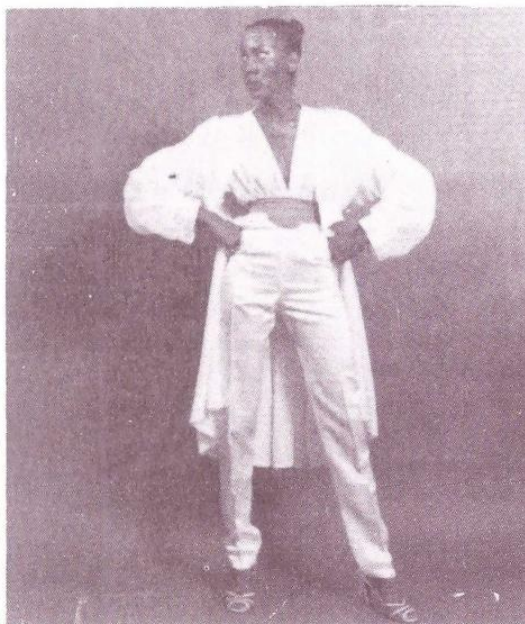
Karen: I prefer to do very classy, smart clothes, the sort of things you can be noticed in. I like all sorts of decorations e.g. embroidery, printing etc. The present vogue for forties and fifties fashions is exactly the type of thing I like. I am also very interested in Knit-wear. But since leaving College, I've also developed a keen interest in Menswear. Eventually I'd like to print all my own fabrics.

Staunch: What have you done since leaving College?

Karen: The first thing I did since leaving college, was set of outfits for a well known British Soul group. I've also done some illustrations for several companies, but most of my work has been for private customers, where I design and make one-off outfits. It's expensive but they're exclusive to the people who buy them. I am slowly building up a clientele. I also started teaching at the Omnibus Centre, one evening a week and I have just finished designing and making all the outfits for a production to be staged by the Omnibus Youth Group.



White Sailor-type suit: Jacket lined and piped in blue Satin, matching blue backless top with cummerband.



White Voile Jacket trimmed with white satin, over long sleeved, open-front silk dress and trousers. Pink cummerband at waist.

Staunch: What about your plans for the future?

Karen: At present I am working on my first collection, which will be shown in July at the Omnibus Theatre, East Row W.II. After the show, I plan to take a collection to the West Indies. At the same time I intend to sell to shops under my own label. Eventually I would like to open a showroom and extend to countries in Africa, which at the moment is still very much explored in terms of fashion and black fashion designers.

Staunch: What advice would you have for someone wanting to go into fashion designing?

Karen: The first thing to do is to enquire about the various colleges doing a design course, find out from their prospectus if it is the sort of course you are interested in and also if you have the required qualifications. Try to apply to more than one college, which will give you a better chance of being accepted. Try not to be persuaded by over-zealous Tutors to do a lesser course, but if you are not accepted first time, try again the next year, during which time you could go back to college or get a temporary job.

Staunch: Finally, what qualifications would one need to get into a good fashion college?

Karen: Some fashion colleges are more difficult to get into than others. At the time I entered The London School of Fashion, I needed three O'Levels; but in actual fact needed, given as the requirement for entry to the (S.I.A.D.) exam., I'd also done the Foundation Course and had built up a substantial portfolio of work for my interview.

In building up the portfolio, it is useful to show a good variety of colour and a sense of creativity.



Hail me Sister

I hope you all going to enjoy some food from this ya Korner. For to tell the truth I had my fingers crossed too. I guess the compliments was most appropriate. . . . mmm.

This week everyone can praise your fish!!

FRESH FISH & PINEAPPLE JUICE

Fry fish

As much fish as you need. There are about three to the lb with small snappers, herrings and goat fish. Bream is quite good weight usually.

Try always to eat fish that has scales as the others are sea-scavengers, i.e. tuna and mackerel. Make use of your fishmongers. Ask him to clean and de-scale your fish.

METHOD

1. Wash fish, after trimming away remainder of scales, gut and fins. Salt well.
2. Put on wire mat, so as they drain free of water. (Some folks coat fish before frying - this I find impairs the flavour, unless you are experienced in cooking.)
3. Heat oil until very hot. Whilst oil is heating, towel dry fish of any excess water.
4. Slice along their sides and sprinkle on some pepper, preferably black.
5. Place two or three to the pan and slowly fry until brown on both sides.
6. Put on dish ready to serve.

KOOKIE'S KORNER

VARIETIES OF USES

- A. Heat $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of vinegar. Slice one whole onion, also a ripe pepper. Add these to vinegar and pour on fish.
- B. Heat a little oil/fat. Lightly fry onions, pepper and tomato. Put fish in this and slowly simmer by adding a good drop of water and a dollop of margarine. Add salt and pepper to taste.
- C. Use variety (b) with 1 teaspoon of curry powder for curried fish.
- D. Boil water, add two or three fingers of green banana, a slice of yam, eddoes and dumpling. Salt to taste. Add fish and a hint of green thyme, pepper and onion for a delicious fish broth. This is good for the sick.

Garnish

Sliced lemon makes a sensible garnish for fish and many other dishes.

*Lemon is a must when handling fish. Lemon added to the washing-up leaves utensils free of a raw fishy smell.

Storing the fish

Make use of your freezer by storing your fried fish. This saves time.

PINEAPPLE JUICE

Back home we have a fruit called sour sop. This made into a drink is the main drink after many a Sunday dinner. De-licious.

It is noted in England that the canned pineapple juice has a distinct taste of sour sop juice. . . .

- 1 can Libby's Pineapple juice
- Condensed milk
- 2 drops Vanilla Essence
- Pinch nutmeg
- Rum or brandy flavourings (optional)
- Ice cubes

METHOD

1. Sweeten juice with condensed milk
2. Add essence and flavourings
3. Sprinkle with nutmet and serve chilled or with ice cubes

** If these recipes please you, tell others. If not do tell us.

GOOD LUCK — ME GAWN!!

BEAN SPROUTS ARE QUICK, EASY, NUTRITIOUS AND FUN TO GROW.

Here is a way of growing vegetables that will appeal to people who are impatient to see results, those with limited growing space and cooks who enjoy experimenting with new flavours.

Bean sprouts are ready to eat in 2 - 6 days, can be grown all the year round indoors without soil and are highly nutritious, suitable both for raw salad vegetables or cooked.

It is an idea familiar to all who have indulged in eating bean sprouts (of Chinese take-away fame) but the idea is catching on and the various types of seeds suitable for growing and eating in sprout form are now more easily available, as are fairly elaborate sprouting kits and recipes suggesting different ways to cook your vegetables.

METHOD

To grow in a jar. Growing seeds in a glass jar is a perfectly effective method and could hardly be simpler. You just put about a teaspoonful of beans into a clean jar, rinse the beans with cold or tepid water three or four times. Fix a piece of muslin over the neck of the jar with a rubber band and place the container on its side so that any more water can drain off. Repeat the rinsing process morning and evening, daily until the sprouts are ready to eat. They can be kept in the dark if you prefer white sprouts or in the light so they become green. Normal room temperature is ideal for germination, but if the sprouting beans start to smell at all unpleasant, move the jar to a cooler place and rinse more frequently. As a rough guide to the size of jar you will need, the sprouts can occupy up to ten times the original volume of the beans.

Why not start an indoor vegetable garden with a selection of 'Sprouts'? There are quite a few types you can try including Mung beans (Chinese bean sprouts). These take from three to six days to sprout, don't keep them any longer than this or you may find them rather bitter to taste. Fenugreek has a spicy flavour, slightly reminiscent of curry if eaten very soon after germination. It is a delicious ingredient for curries and also adds an unusual tang to salads when used raw. Adzuki beans make shoots 1 - 1½ in. long and have a delicious nutty taste. Red and green lentils can also be used. All these sprouts are nutritionally valuable for their very high content of protein, minerals and vitamins. Most of them can be stored in the fridge. Apart from the other advantages, there are no problems with pest and these vegetables are fun to grow!

WHERE ITS AT

I am going to cry out of hell, I'm
gonna bawl like thunder
Ripping all illusion asunder
And you are the rip-oof merchant
I'm gonna demand my natural rights,
right

Even for my grave I want earth
So to live I want land sand
A square piece of desert even
So I can hide my nakedness
This man must rule somewhere
My piece of ground mine all around
A man becomes himself
Master creator of his own home
Yes I want to build my dome
Even carry it in some stone
You keep your concrete castles
I want my piece of bush, even in a
commune,

A man must know his tomb
I don't covet your villas
Nor do I want your women
My companion is meat for I
Give I the desolate domain
I will prepare my peoples paradise
Remember that I am the savage
The runaway blood thirsty slave
I am the extreme left wing
A desperate man trapped and caged
My mind meditates in another
dimension

I am time-bombed to oblivion
If I cannot find my sanctuary
This civilisation is not mine
But my life demands a piece of earth
My undeniable human rights
No matter where in the world at
birth and death

A piece of ground is our own
And to survive need earth
The sound of ghettos are better than
your orchestra
My food in the wilderness richer than
all your festivities

Get off my back I want to rest
Or we destroy each other's next best
Once out of hell I am taking
Not breaking any laws by taking
What is mine from my progenitors
In a black sub-continent
I build Egypt out of mud out of a
swamp
I'll create Zion for I am the
black minded Lion

Ras Tezfa

STAUNCH ACKNOWLEDGES

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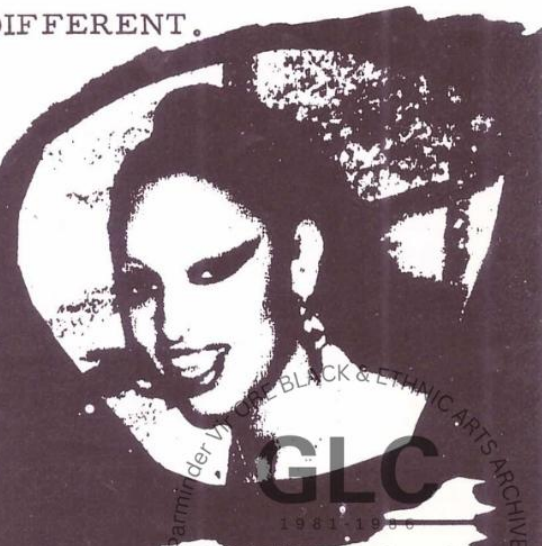
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