

# SILENCE NO MORE

## The Black Conservative Phenomenon

by Hakeem Jeffries

There has been a recent trend in the Black political arena which I believe threatens to sustain the oppression of the Black masses. The phenomenon I refer to is the rise of the Black conservative. The most notable indicator of this is the appointment of Justice Clarence Thomas to the United States Supreme Court. Why is this dangerous? Let us first examine an historical analogy.

During the period of African enslavement, our ancestors were given the duality of the Field Negro and the House Negro. The Field Negro labored from dawn 'till dusk, had nothing but contempt for his white master, and most importantly, the majority of Black slaves, who were Field Negroes. In contemporary terms, what we would refer to as 'the masses'.

The House Negroes didn't labor in the field, they were domestic servants. The House Negro was dressed up and was led to believe that he or she was better than those in the field. Most importantly, the House Negro sought to emulate the white master. This emulation was not designed with the interests of the masses at heart. Rather, the motivating force was personal gain.

### -Token Blacks-

Perhaps this is the problem with the black conservative politician of today. Their political agenda is not designed to contribute to the upliftment of their people. These right-wing opportunists espouse the political ideology of the power

structure and, in return, they are elevated to positions historically reserved for whites.

Or perhaps the current trend is to have a new "token Black" who emulates the white master in thought instead of a "token Black" who may have divergent ideological thought but is impotent because of numerical isolation.

There are those who may feel that the Black conservative may well have the interests of the Black masses at heart. Their supporters feel that advocating a right-wing agenda and embracing the Republican Party is more effective than opposing the system. This notion is simply unacceptable.

Conservative political thought rejects the redistribution of wealth. Conservative political thought shuns social reforms and favors a huge defense industry. Conservative political thought does not advocate Civil Rights advances and deems affirmative action programs "quota systems" and reverse discrimination. Most importantly, it is conservative political thought which maintains a socioeconomic structure in the United States where Blacks exist in the lower strata in disproportionate numbers.

I question if a true champion of racism would affiliate themselves with individuals who seek election by promoting racial stereotypes of Blacks. George Bush did this in 1988 with the image of Willie Horton. Jesse Helms did it in 1989 while running against a Black Senatorial candidate in North Carolina.

Of course, there is David Duke. While running for governor in Louisiana in 1991, he blamed the state's economic problems on welfare mothers, crack babies, and "that radical organization", the NAACP. This is the method of the white conservatives. Their tactics should provide you with some insight into where their interests lie. Certainly, it is not with the upliftment of the Black race. Clearly, any Black alliance with these factions promote no collective ends, only selfish ones.

The Black conservative buys into the idea of the American dream, the dream in which hard work and perseverance eventually liberate and reap benefits. However, this totally ignores the economic reality of this country's capitalist system. Capitalism necessitates the perpetuation of a permanent underclass. Capitalism in a racist society means that the underclass will be disproportionately Black.

The American dream will never be a reality for most Blacks living in a racist and capitalist United States. The Black conservative's strategy for our liberation is lacking. In fact, I question whether they believe their own rhetoric.

A conservative seeks to maintain an elite business class through the promotion of multinational corporations and the military complex. Both serving to sustain the current situation of a minority of the people owning a majority of the wealth. The economic foundation of conservatism prevents an effective

**The economic foundation of conservatism prevents an effective strategy of Black liberation, leading me to call into question the true motive of our right-wing brothers and sisters.**

strategy of Black liberation, leading me to call into question the true motives of our right-wing brothers and sisters.

### -White Media-

Perhaps the most frightening aspect of the rise of Black conservatives is that of their popular acceptance by the predominately white media. Clarence Thomas, Colin Powell, and Shelby Steele are hailed as our leaders and pointed to as examples for us to follow. I find it suspect when the white power structure and their propaganda emissaries, the media, tell us who our leaders should be. Do you think that a ruling elite would promote individuals who would seek to dismantle their vice-like grip on power? Of course not.

Dr. Leonard Jeffries and Minister Louis Farrakhan have come under intense fire. Where do you think their interests lie?

Dr. Jeffries has challenged the existing white supremacist educational system and the longstanding distortion of history. His reward has been a media lynching complete with character assassinations and inflammatory erroneous accusations.

Clarence Thomas was appointed by George Bush to the highest court in the nation. Colin Powell was appointed by George Bush to lead the military establishment "policemen of the Wall Street Bankers", in the words of Cesar Augusto Sandino. Where do you think their interests lie?

### -Black Conservative Opportunists-

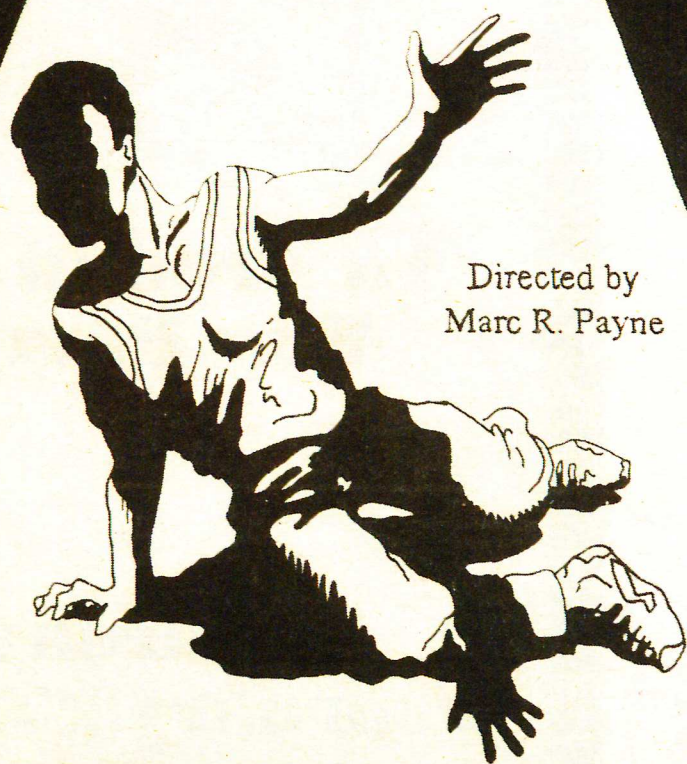
The House Negro of the slavery era and the Black conservative of today are both opportunists interested in securing some measure of happiness for themselves within the existing social order. In both cases, the social order has Blacks occupying the lowest societal echelon.

I think that it is appropriate now to make clear that I am not trying to encourage the restriction of Black political thought to one particular ideology. It is my hope that African-Americans will begin to evaluate, critically, the merits of the Black conservative phenomenon and then assign it its rightful place in the struggle to free persons of African descent from oppression.

H  
A  
P  
P  
Y  
  
B  
I  
R  
T  
H  
D  
A  
Y  
  
A  
D  
R  
I  
A  
!

## THE MIGHTY GENTS

by Richard Wesley



Directed by  
Marc R. Payne

February 21-24 Studio B 8:15 curtain

Tickets \$3.50 (Available at the door.)

A University at Binghamton Theater

Department Production

Co-sponsored by the Black Student Talent Coalition

