

Sept 1968
Spelman College

POSITION PAPER ON BLACK IDENTITY

BROTHER GERALD MCWORTER (WHO DOES NOT KNOW HIS REAL NAME)

Who are we? What shall we call ourselves? What names shall we give our children? In what language can we regain-create ~~our~~ our true identity?

We are African peoples.

We are African peoples in the Americas, north and south, and must call ourselves Africans.

Our children should be named after our heroic ancestors, a process of spanning time to give our children a tool to generate meaningful role models and a positive approach to the shape of things to come.

Our language must have two functions:

1. to serve as that vehicle which unites us historically with our origin, culture and identity;
2. to reflect our lived experience and thereby serve us with maximum ~~practical~~ practical utility.

The first function can only be met with an indigenous African language because that is the only authentic way to link ourselves with Africa before the White man. The second function is met by our African English, that special improvisation that makes English hip.