



# MONTHLY REPORT

August, 1973

Dear Friends:

The new school year is upon us. And while we prepare our children for it physically, with new pencils and new blue jeans, we should also be spiritually preparing both them and ourselves for the struggle for a new black education -- particularly at the public school level.

Our July *Monthly Report* carried the first part of a speech on the new black education by Vincent Harding. This month the last half of that speech is combined with another lecture made to a group of Atlanta parents. The emphasis in this edited version is on goals and strategies for realizing that education, hence this broader consideration has led us to giving the piece a new title.

We hope that all of our readers, and not just parents, will find this article useful in pondering the meaning of a new black existence in America -- for ourselves and for the many generations still to come.

\* \* \* \* \*

## GOALS IN THE STRUGGLE FOR A NEW BLACK EDUCATION (Part II)

The closer we examine the education that our black children are getting in today's public schools, the more we recognize the stark inadequacies of that education. It demonstrates to us that black people must commit themselves to the development of a new education for the new times in which we live. Some of us carry on this creative task in independent schools. Most of us, however, will have to challenge the public school systems where the vast majority of our children, our teachers, and our educational tax monies are.

The education of our children is our responsibility; . . . we cannot place it in anyone else's hands anymore. We cannot expend precious time and energies convincing white people that they ought to stay in systems where we are now in the majority; nor can we demean and deceive ourselves by assuming that we need their reluctant presence to develop new, excellent, creative educational experiences. (Neither should we exhaust ourselves by running away from them -- once we have decided what we want to do, and set about doing it.)

But as soon as these things are said, we must immediately ask ourselves, what are we going to create in place of the present chaos, especially when so much of this chaos has been imbibed in our own lives? What do we want of any new education for our children? In other words, what are the new goals toward which we must first turn ourselves and then our schools, as they carry out their part of the larger educational process?

As a point of departure, I'd like to suggest seven preliminary goals for the education of black children in the public schools. All of these flow out of my own sense of what Martin King, Malcolm X and the Freedom Movement were about at their best. All of them challenge us to decide what we shall be about in the future. They are presented in sketchy outline here. But, by and large, they attempt to speak to the issue of how our children shall view themselves, their people, and their world.

These goals self-consciously avoid leaping into the familiar professional discussions of the "skills" our children need to "compete" in American society. Rather they address first the spirit, the attitudes, the values our children need to be authentically human. They place primary attention on the inner equipment black children need to understand themselves and this American society. And they are based on the fervent hope that such a vision will help our children perceive the need for radical, personal and societal transformation, and inspire them to demand, seize and master whatever skills are required for their new tasks. In other words,