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**IBW AND
EDUCATION FOR LIBERATION**



with and IBW historical overview by

Vincent Harding

and an essay by Lerone Bennett, Jr.

Black Paper No. 1

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Chicago, Illinois

INSTITUTE OF THE BLACK WORLD

Atlanta, Georgia

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Preface to the Revised Second Edition

When this Black Paper No. 1 first appeared in April, 1970, it bore the title, *The Challenge of Blackness*. Later its theme was expanded and formed the basis of Lerone Bennett's book of the same name, published by Johnson Publications.

The original Black Paper has been out of stock for some time, but as demand for it is still great we are happy to publish this revised second edition. It contains a brief postscript which brings IBW's history up to date, but its text is otherwise unchanged.

Under its new title, *IBW and Education for Liberation*, it becomes part of the series of Black Papers which the Institute of the Black World now publishes jointly with Third World Press.

Atlanta, Georgia
August, 1973

IBW

INTRODUCTION

It is almost axiomatic that many of the significant documents of Black struggle in America - like the documents of authentic movements toward freedom everywhere - grow out of specific and concrete moments of confrontation and need. So it is with *The Challenge of Blackness*.

On the evening of November 7, 1969, Lerone Bennett stood before a small group of Black Studies Directors and consultants gathered in Atlanta and set forth this statement. The situation was electric, filled at once with expectation and no little apprehension. For most of the Directors had just begun their first academic year in the maelstrom of the struggle for Black education on white campuses. They had come to Atlanta at the invitation of the Institute of the Black World, and — even so early in the year — they already nursed a score of wounds, recognized a strange set of confusions and betrayals on their campuses, and sought more answers than they could ever expect.

It is not the purpose of this Introduction to re-live that seminar (the first of its kind in the nation), for its results will soon be available elsewhere - and a portion of its spirit was evoked in the February, 1970 issue of *Ebony*. But it is essential to identify the context. *The Challenge of Blackness* was a personal distillation and clarification by Lerone Bennett of the collective experiences of the staff of the Institute. It was an attempt to begin a creative encounter among that staff, its Associates and the Directors of some 35 Black Studies programs.

These persons had been invited to Atlanta because the Institute, then only three months into its own full operation, had already identified the issue of Black education on white campuses as one of its single concerns. During the previous summer a task force of Black students, faculty and others had interviewed persons and examined the documents related to some 200 Black Studies programs. We then attempted to identify that very small segment which seemed to hold some clear promise as possible models on which the thousands of Black students in northern schools could build in their movements towards an education appropriate to our struggle. Essentially, the Directors who were invited to the seminar represented that small group of programs, scattered in schools from Massachusetts to California.