

34. W. E. B. DuBois, "The Training of Negroes for Social Power," reprinted as a pamphlet by Atlanta University (1903), Arthur Schomburg Collection, New York Public Library.

35. W. E. B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York, 1963), 16-18.

36. W. E. B. DuBois, *Dusk of Dawn* (New York, 1940), 209-220, should be compared with Cruse, 87-90.

37. The social and educational origins of pre-World War I intellectuals have not been carefully studied. Some of the data can be found in Constance McL. Green, *The Secret City, A History of Race Relations in the Nation's Capital* (Princeton, 1967), 119-154; John Mercer Langston, *From the Virginia Plantation to the National Capital* (Hartford, Connecticut, 1894), 296-349, 521-524; T. Thomas Fortune, *Black and White, Land Labor and Politics in the South* (New York, 1884), 181-184, and in the columns of the *Washington Bee* for the 1890's. The formal institutional leadership at the nation's political capital and their close ties to the Republican Party made the context of prescriptions about a "talented tenth" very different from the suggestions about "intellectuals" by Cruse.

38. Charlayne Hunter, "The New Black Businessman," *Saturday Review*, vol. LII, no. 34 (August 23, 1969), 59-60.

39. Douglas C. North, *The Economic Growth of the United States, 1790-1860* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1961), 66-74, 122-134.

40. Daniel P. Moynihan, *The Negro Family, The Case for National Action* (Washington, D.C., 1965), 5-6, emphasizes this point.

41. Sterling Spero and Abram Harris, *The Black Worker, The Negro and the Labor Movement* (New York, 1931), documents this point for a whole spectrum of unions. Conditions of continuing discrimination during World War II are documented in Charles S. Johnson, *To Stem the Tide, A Survey of Racial Tension Areas in the United States* (Boston and Chicago, 1943), chapter I.

42. See the provocative essay on the social importance of unions in Frank Tannenbaum, *A Philosophy of Labor* (New York, 1951).

43. Eugene Genovese, *The Political Economy of Slavery, Studies in the Economy and Society of the Slave South* (New York, 1965), 41-69; Arthur Raper and Ira De A. Reid, *Sharecroppers All* (Chapel Hill, 1941). The importance of the investment in education of Whites for American economic growth is analyzed in Albert Fishlow, "The American Common School Revival: Fact or Fancy?," in Henry Rosovsky, ed., *Industrialization in Two Systems, Essays in Honor of Alexander Gerschenkron* (New York, 1966), and Fishlow, "Levels in Nineteenth Century American Investment in Education," manuscript in possession of author. For the diversion of funds from Negro to White schools in the southeast see Louis Harlan, *Separate but Unequal, Public School Campaigns and Racism in the Southern Seaboard States, 1901-1915* (Chapel Hill, 1958), 102-269.

44. Richard A. Cloward and Francis Fox Piven, "Migration, Politics and Welfare," *Saturday Review*, vol. LI, no. 46, 31-35.

45. John P. Lewis, *Quiet Crisis in India, Economic Development and American Policy* (Washington, D.C., 1962), 50-113, 137-201; Albert O. Hirschman, *The Strategy of Economic Development* (New Haven, 1958), 88, notes, "Our principal assumption throughout this essay is that the real scarcity in underdeveloped countries is not the resources themselves but the ability to bring them into play." The colonialism model argues both a lack of resources and a lack of skills. If people believe in the colonialism model, some outside source of resources is necessary.

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## a response

Given the bitterness of the controversy provoked by Harold Cruse's *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual*, this author was reluctant to enter into it until some of the heat had subsided. An additional cause for hesitation was the general level at which the issues were being discussed (or not discussed), i.e., ad hominem arguments and "psychological" interpretations of Cruse's motives in writing a book at all and in writing this book in particular. Much of the discussion also has dwelt on the propriety and accuracy of his criticism of various Black thinkers and on his alleged "anti-Semitism."<sup>1</sup>

Such concerns prompted some writers to rush into print to defend themselves, or their friends, or their particular interest group against Cruse's charges. On the other hand, a number of scholars—Black and White—were so overwhelmed by the novelty of Cruse's ideas, his approach

and the sheer volume of the material he presented that the book was accepted as "truth," praised uncritically, and used to buttress a wide variety of arguments.<sup>2</sup>

Analytical and critical discussions of Cruse's ideas and contentions should be welcomed and encouraged; and it was with this intent that I agreed to comment on Toll's review essay. However, much to my disappointment, Toll has so intruded his own misconceptions about the nature of Black America and of American society in general that my task has to be enlarged to include: a defense of Cruse's ideas against Toll's misreadings; comments on Cruse's ideas; and comments on Toll. I am not sure that such a task can be accomplished in this brief note, but hopefully the attempt will be of some value. To paraphrase Toll: the intellectual ferment to which his essay gives rise is more important than the accuracy of his specific conclusions.

Perhaps the best way to proceed is with a point by point commentary on Toll's essay merged with several general comments on our differences in assumptions and approach.

First, and most obvious, is Toll's anti-radical bias leading to several misleading and inaccurate statements and conclusions. In a very brief discussion of the importance of social class, Toll rejects the efforts of Charles Beard, Samuel Hays, Lloyd Warner and C. Wright Mills (all of whom have varying definitions and notions of class) by citing Robert A. Nisbet's 'conclusion' that "a formal definition of social class cannot be applied effectively to American society." This is by no means an adequate rebuttal of Cruse's use of class versus ethnic forces in American history and Toll says nothing else on this subject. In his discussion of Cruse's view of New Deal economics, Toll says that Cruse's conclusions are based on "the Marxist assumption that any regime needs an ideology to rationalize its actions." No citation to the work of Marx or any Marxist is given. It is this writer's understanding that the concept that ideologies are used universally by governments to rationalize all sorts of actions, policies, etc., is a social science truism not necessarily attributable to the work of Marx. In a discussion of New Deal foreign policy, Toll labels a Cruse assumption "orthodox Leninist" and rejects Cruse's view of the role of economic interests in foreign policy. Toll makes the statement that "In a country whose citizens privately own property, one must assume that the government is obligated to protect that property when invested abroad." This is a pretty good definition of imperialism! What Toll says is that the United States is under no obligation to recognize the national boundaries or sovereignty of other nations if a threat to the property of U.S. citizens is deemed to exist. To illustrate the absurdity of such a belief, consider the prospect of a traffic jam of foreign troops landing at the New York's World's Fair if a riot broke out endangering the property of a number of nations who deemed the U.S. police forces inadequate. The rest of Toll's discussion for foreign policy is contradictory. He cites American fear of social revolution abroad as a major determinant without mentioning that social revolutions aboard threaten U.S. economic interests. Toll contends that Cruse's application of the "Leninist mace" is not valid for foreign policy nor are his "Leninist insights" on culture and leadership. In his concluding remarks, Toll accuses Cruse of having a Marxist bias which limited the success of his work.

The purpose of the foregoing is to indicate my displeasure at Toll's decision to carry on the Cold War tactic of evading the discussion of an

idea by linking it to ones held by Marx-Engels-Lenin etc., rendering it, in the eyes of most American readers, invalid by definition. Toll does not cite a single work by Marx or Lenin while linking Cruse's ideas to theirs throughout his review.

A second problem of Toll's stems from his aforementioned inadequate understanding of the social and economic history of American society in general, and Black America in particular, which affects his subsequent attempts to confront Cruse's contentions. Toll states that "In his [Cruse's] desire to find continuity in the crisis of Negro intellectuals, for example, he often ignores general demographic changes which in turn alter the contours of those crises." Toll does not cite examples of this because, in fact, Cruse does place his "crisis" in context, e.g., in his chapter "Harlem Background." A more valid criticism of Cruse, which Toll makes later and which I share, is of the important place he assigns Harlem in the history of Black America.

Toll says that slavery kept Blacks "apart from the scramble for wealth and power" in nineteenth-century America and that "the stagnation of Southern agriculture between 1870 and 1940 further separated blacks from industrialism." On the contrary, the stagnation of Southern agriculture was a large factor in the mass migration of Blacks from plantations to industries of the north and west during the First World War and after until, by 1940, a substantial percentage of Blacks lived in urban environments.

Toll makes contradictory statements as to the social origins of Black culture. First, he says that Blacks have "America's only indigenous folk culture," then he says that Black intellectuals are its creators. Black folk culture, like most folk culture, is generally the work of anonymous figures; its impact and origins cannot be analyzed by focusing on the work of intellectuals. Cruse's work emphasizes the difference in outlook and values between lower-class Blacks—the repository of Black folk culture—and the generally middle-class intellectuals who sought integration.

The ignoring of social class results in the confusion that mars Toll's exposition of Cruse's arguments concerning the relationship between ethnic groups and the development of American capitalism. For Toll to contend that "massive college training created work in which ethnicity has become obsolete" and "ethnicity is an historical not a generic sociological phenomena" makes one wonder what society Toll is talking about. Any politician can enlighten Toll as to the importance of ethnicity in contemporary America. Toll's misconceptions about the role of ethnicity extend to his discussion of current radical youth. Toll rightly contends that radical youth are not attracted by a call to return to their traditional ethnic loyalties, but he is wrong when he says that radical youth do not seek a return to ethnicity as part of their rejection of "consumer culture." Radical (and not so radical) youth's adoption of American Indian dress and life-style, enthusiasm for Oriental religions, and attempts to become 'white Negroes' (Right on!, wha's happenin,' brother and sister?, etc.) are attempts to return to ethnicity with a vengeance.

On the question of Cruse's discussion of the nature of culture, Toll is simply mistaken when he says that Cruse does not discuss movies and displays little interest in technology. Cruse's chapter "Mass Media and Cultural Democracy" is unique in its concern with the significance of technical developments in the area of communication for Black America.

As for Cruse's failure to discuss the role of religion and the organized church in Black America, Toll is jumping the gun. What Cruse calls for is for intellectuals to develop a cultural analysis and program; it is their responsibility to investigate and evaluate the role of religion in Black culture, not Cruse. Toll's noting of the fact that Black intellectuals since the 1920's have broken or never developed institutional ties to the masses of Blacks is nothing new. Cruse's book is devoted to an exposition of this process, and his proposal for the alleviation of it. The lack of ties with the masses, the opting for integration and the rejection of the nationalist strain are Cruse's themes.

Toll's discussion of the historical role of Blacks in the American economy is so oversimplified that it is difficult to comment on. Leonard Broom and Norval D. Glenn's *Transformation of the Negro American* (New York, 1967) is one source that challenges Toll's contentions.

Toll interprets much too narrowly Bunche's framework for the study of Black political leadership. Despite its integrationist assumptions and those of Meier, Spear, Ladd, et al., Bunche's insights do have relevance as a careful reading of his memorandum to Myrdal will reveal.

One hesitates to go on criticizing in detail an essay that this writer obviously feels is inadequate, but if some degree of scholarship is to be maintained in the study of the Afro-American experience, candor is necessary and the inadequacies of work based on a lack of awareness or familiarity with the existing literature must be pointed out. One more brief example will suffice to show my reason for annoyance. In footnote thirty-eight Toll says that "The social and educational origins of pre-World War I intellectuals have not been carefully studied." Yet in footnote fourteen he cites August Meier's *Negro Thought in America, 1880-1914* (Ann Arbor, 1963), a condensation of a 1,000+ page dissertation which deals quite specifically with the issues raised by Toll. More recent studies include S. W. Fullinwider's *The Mind and Mood of Black America* (Homewood, Ill., 1969), and Stephen Fox's biography of Monroe Trotter (Atheneum, 1970). Article length treatments are large in number and readily available in the *Journal of Negro History*, the *Journal of Negro Education* and *Phylon*. Biographies of W.E.B. DuBois by Elliot Rudwick (*W.E.B. DuBois: Propagandist of the Negro Protest*, Philadelphia, 1960) and Francis Broderick (*W.E.B. DuBois: Negro Leader in a Time of Crisis*, Stanford, 1959) also contain data on these issues.

Having devoted much space to specific criticism, I will conclude with summary observations of Toll's general approach to Cruse. Toll writes from liberal assumptions. Having condemned Cruse for his "Marxist biases" and having rejected Cruse's application of Marxian economics, the "colonial" analogy and class analysis, Toll leaves nothing to admire in Cruse except his (Toll's) version of Cruse's insights on "culture" and "leadership." Abstracted from their historical context and from that provided by Cruse, Toll meanders aimlessly for several pages before ending with a sentence which as near as I can tell is meaningless.

There is much in Cruse's book to argue with, but that is much more in Toll's review of it. I apologize to the reader for having chosen to do the latter.

John H. Bracey, Jr.

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## footnotes

1. On this latter point, some writers seem to feel that to discuss critically, the activities and ideologies of individual Jews, or of particular groups of Jews, is by definition anti-Semitism. I hold no such view and feel that critical analyses of Black-Jewish relations in the United States is a legitimate focus for scholarly investigation.

2. A critical review of the Cruse literature, combined with an attempt to refute Cruse and his book on a number of different levels is Ernest Kaiser's, "The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual," *Freedomways*, Vol. 9 (Winter, 1969), 24-41. Another recent and inadequate attempt to confront Cruse is Robert Chrisman, "The Crisis of Harold Cruse," *The Black Scholar*, Vol. 1 (November, 1969), 77-84.

## a reply

Some of Bracey's comments are well-taken and reflect either overstatements or elliptical comments by me. Bracey is correct to note that the stagnation of southern agriculture contributed to the industrialization of Negroes. However, I was referring to those who remained behind and did not migrate until after 1940. Those who came after 1940 found an even more industrialized city which had a diminishing need for unskilled labor than did their predecessors of the 1900 to 1930 period. The stagnation of agriculture did not itself force people off the land. Rather the attraction of wages in the cities, the reorganization of agriculture under the AAA, and the mechanization of agriculture after 1940 lured or forced people off. Bracey is also correct to cite the numerous accounts of the social and educational background of pre-World War I Black intellectuals. I meant that we need an analysis of why such backgrounds predisposed them to emphasize certain political as opposed to social and economic issues.

On the whole, however, I believe that my analysis of Cruse's elitism is sound and that I have a greater appreciation for his work than Bracey states. I note that Cruse provides much needed information about the tensions in Black and, partly, in White America from 1915 to the present. Cruse dealt provocatively with the left and with Black intellectuals and requires his readers to reevaluate much of twentieth-century cultural history. But because Cruse chose to combine historical exposition with "cultural" prescription he creates a variety of problems. Most importantly, does his projected criticism bias his historical account? For example, if the intellectuals of the 1920's misunderstood the cultural interests of the majority of Harlemites and the ethnic nature of American social life, does that accurately account for their dilemmas or does it explain why intellectuals have dilemmas today? Moreover, is it true that Negro intellectuals have some abiding relationship to the "masses" that must only be "understood" for them to assert leadership, that the "masses" have not changed and produced leaders of their own, and that American social structure has changed and thus so have our social conflicts? Such questions can only be answered if we have an historically-sound cultural analysis of Black life, of its impact upon White Americans, and vice versa. I regret that Bracey did not pick up on what seems to me the crucial problem in a book which is both historical and prescriptive.

I should now like to examine some of Bracey's comments in turn. First of all, I was not trying to rebut Cruse's use of class versus "ethnic forces" but arguing that Cruse *had* avoided formal definitions of class and explained American tensions better than the sociologists and historians that I cited. I maintain, however, that Cruse underestimates the devolution of ethnicity. The 1970 census indicates that more people live in suburbs than in the cities, and one cannot find in the suburbs ethnic neighborhoods anything like the unique cultural enclaves that existed in central cities. Politicians may conspicuously eat pizza and bagels but they spend more time at meetings of chambers of commerce, labor unions, shopping centers and factories. Furthermore, young Whites are not searching for a new "ethnicity" but a new religion and their identification with eastern religion or with Blacks is more than an expression of cultural needs.

Secondly, although I am hardly a radical I am not trying to continue the Cold War. Indeed, on first reading *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual* I found it so bitter a denunciation of the Communist Party that I believed it a Cold War tract. Nor was I trying to cast political aspersions on Cruse by tracing his thoughts to their Marxist origins. I was arguing that, while Cruse rejected Marxism as a system for analyzing American society, he nevertheless allowed his early reading of Marx and Lenin to shape his interpretation of our foreign policy. Nor was I trying to defend our foreign policy. I merely noted that any government acts to protect what it conceives to be its interests and that we should not be surprised when our government acts to control