

By Harriett Muhammad

(This is a continuation of an answer to a letter from a middle class so-called Negro who is satisfied with himself and feels others can make it without help just like he did.)

OUR PEOPLE GET so carried away with protesting about discrimination and unequal opportunities until they over look or play down the half-truths that exist in the black communities. For instance, filthy conditions. We say the slum apartments have cockroaches, etc. The price you would have to pay to buy a supply of insecticides is cheaper than the price you pay on cigarettes.

Nobody could make me live with roaches even if I had to spray everyday at my OWN expense. Sure, it's the landlord's duty to have the building exterminated. But until he was forced to, I wouldn't sit non-violently around while the cockroach army planned its next attack. Since you appreciate and understand the value of being clean — why don't you help teach others?

Soap is cheaper than liquor. There is NO excuse for any poor person in this country to wear dirty clothes or live in a dirty home. We must learn to better ourselves in the fundamental, everyday things of life, too. I mention this because too many of us are satisfied to sit back and blame this society for all of its evils without trying to correct those that are in our immediate power to correct.

THREE-FOURTHS OF our people have to live on small incomes. Yet, we get hooked up behind every T.V. commercial that is presented— commercials that were writ-

ten with middle class people in mind. We get so far into debt buying clothes and cars and gadgets till we never have a chance to save any money for a larger, better, future purchase.

How many of us drive the best cars that are made up to shabby rented homes or apartments? How many? The percentage is an unhealthy one, I'm sure. How many of us celebrate the holidays, going all out to have a good time and jump into so much debt till we don't clear it up until the next holiday?

We've got to stop laughing at ourselves like it's a big joke and keep right on with these things as if this doesn't apply to ourselves, when we know it does. If you can say that these things don't apply to you, then do what you can to get others straight. At this point, I would like to pass on to everyone a wise little verse that was written by an eighty-nine year old San Francisco woman, Sister Lenora.

"HE WHO KNOWS"

He who knows
And knows not he knows
Is asleep, Awaken him

He who knows not
And knows he knows not
Is simple, Teach him

He who knows not
And knows not he knows not
Is a fool, Shun him

He who knows
And knows he knows
Is wise, Follow him.
Something on your mind?
Write and tell me about it.

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