SOME TOO SENSITIVE

On Tuesday January 7, 1964 a very good question was asked in chapel. The question was about the threatened demonstration against the use of black faced mummers in Philadelphia. The threat was made by NAACP and CORE groups.

I must admit that even I would have agreed with the boy who questioned the tolerance of the Negro in this action. Everyone knows that the average Negro is dark-completed. Why then should there be any demonstrations?

My mind flashes back to a program that I used to watch. The program was the Untouchables. I remember that this program was cancelled because the Italians did not like the stereotype that the program had given them.

Many hard working Italians formed a group to get rid of “the gangster image” that the program had given them. The program was taken off many networks for this reason. The cancellation of this program brought about many protests
from people because they had lost a "good program." Was this tolerance on the part of the Italians?

The two questions of tolerance seem to have but one answer. The answer is the sensitivity of both groups in regard to race and nationality. I am not an expert on racial or international relations. I only feel qualified, as a Negro, to express my personal thoughts on subjects that concern me directly or indirectly.

The question is not that white men paint their faces black. This is our racial distinction. It is the fact that people are made to laugh at the huge grotesquely black figures. Are these people laughing at the antics of the man behind the mask or the black figure being made to perform them?

As I think more about the subject I am ashamed of myself for ever doubting the wisdom of the NAACP and CORE in this action. It shows that we as a race are becoming more sensitive. This does not mean that every time a Negro doesn't get a job that he should say that "it's just because I'm a Negro."

If the accusation is unfounded, this Negro has done as much against his fellow Negroes as a Klu Klux Klansman or member of the White Citizens Council. This type of sensitivity is ridiculous.

Tolerance did you say? I think that we Negroes have been tolerant for a long time. No doubt we will have to be tolerant for an even longer time. However, tolerance is a two way street, and tolerance is most effective when it is used by all parties involved as a device for finding a settlement more acceptable to all.

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