

January 12, 1970

LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

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It does seem sadly ironic that of all the churches and congregations in Ann Arbor who have been approached by Mr. Charles Thomas in his request to give a reading of the "Black Manifesto" a Jewish congregation should be the only one to have legal proceedings effected to prevent it. But of even greater irony is their claim that it would effect "irreparable damage" to them. I have no doubt that is same Jewish congregation and all other Jewish groups would (indeed, have) hastily defend to the inth degree the right to protest the centuries of maltreatment and discrimination wherever and whenever possible with accusations of anti-semitism cast at whomever would deny them this right and opportunity and not without great justification!

Can it be that now that they find themselves cast in the same light as their historical oppressors (as the "Black Manifesto" most certainly does by addressing its text to "the white Christian churches and Jewish synagogues.... and to all the white racist imperialists who compost it") this Jewish synagogue is showing its true colors where questions of white versus black justice and oppression are concerned? In any event, the very least acknowledgment of guilt on their part must be that they, like their "Christian" counterparts have let the boldness of the presentation by Mr. Thomas and the perhaps harsh language of the indictments contained in this document obscure the laudable, creative, justifiable but necessary aims stated by the authors of this historic document. All whites: Christians, Jews, Atheists or whatever.....will do themselves a tremendous social, and soulful service by not only listening attentively to it being read (or better yet reading it yourselves) whenever and wherever the opportunity presents itself, but by reacting positively and decisively to its requests before we are all made to suffer "irreparable damage" of another series of racial explosions!!!

Signed

P. W. Charles
(A Black citizen of Ann Arbor)