

The Racial

Revolution

Pittsburgh Press

Only Leadership

Was Lacking 8/8/65

WHO SPEAKS FOR THE NEGRO? By Robert Penn Warren. 454 pp. Random House, New York. \$5.95.

By DAVID S. CALDWELL

The obvious conclusion of this book is that no person speaks for the Negro in today's racial revolution in America. There are diverse voices, from diverse walks of life, with diverse vocal inflections. All are extremely articulate, and all have the same general theme—the Negro has been jobbed long enough.

Represented in this volume of verbatim monologues and dialogues and critiques by Warren are the "Big Brass," as well as many men of lesser national reputation, some directly active in the movement, some on the periphery, some on the non-active professional level.

One thing this volume very clearly underscores: the Freedom Movement's breaking into the sun was just a matter of the leadership.

It has been simmering for centuries. Because of the educational opportunities available to some Negroes, the leadership is now here.

The Negro seeks identity, though to say he has never had one is erroneous. He seeks integration, though that word has many faces and meanings. He seeks the ballot, but only as a means to an end. And that end is that he seeks the white man's respect that is, the erasure of the leer, the look.

Much has been written on the Negro freedom movement in this country. Much is yet to be written. Here at least are words from the horses' mouths. Some are irrational, shallow, prejudiced, vindictive, shrill, and Utopian. Many are just the opposite. Many are contradictory. But one thing is for sure: this Movement is here to stay.