

Presidents Records
(Fleming Suppl.)
Box 107
Black Students

PRESS STATEMENT from BAM (Black Action Movement)

April 2, 1970

Let us say from the outset that the Black Action Movement has been elated over the unanimity of support accorded our movement by all sectors of the University Black Community. In addition, we express our profound gratitude to the white members, students, staff and faculty of the Support Coalition who so valiantly joined in our struggle to alter the educational priorities of the University of Michigan. Indeed this was an illustration of the continued viability of the politics of coalition. An especial debt of gratitude we owe to the Center for Research on Conflict Resolution.

Our movement has established at least one very significant precedent. We have shown that, from a well-planned and co-ordinated strategy, coupled with firm internal discipline and undergirded by a strong moral purpose, profound changes can be wrought in the established order; without violence.

We can anticipate, as a result of the successful conclusion of the first stage in our struggle for an education which is relevant to the needs of Blacks and other minorities, that our strategies will be adopted and employed by educational reformists in other colleges and universities; not only in this state, but throughout the nation.

Although we were working from the framework of a limited set of specific demands, our fundamental goal always has been to eradicate the inequities and injustices in this educational system.

We have vividly demonstrated to the University, as well as the larger community, the invalidity of the assumption that Black people are complacent and accommodating. This University has been advised, that in all its future dealings with Black students and faculty, that Black People will not be denied justice; rather, they will demand it with uncompromising dedication and resolute determination.

By forcing the University Administration to open negotiations with B.A.M., we thereby caused the University to acknowledge that the Regental action of March 19, 1970 was a directive to the Administration and not a response to the BAM demands. The initial responses of the administration to most of the specific

demands were deemed unacceptable. Only after negotiations, in the true sense of the word, had been undertaken were we able to achieve a satisfactory resolution to a majority of the demands presented by BAM.

On Wednesday night April 1, 1970 the BAM Membership, on the recommendations of its negotiating team, ratified the agreements which had been made with the Administration--those agreements were deemed sufficient to call an end to the strike.

Those negotiated agreements were as follows:

- (1) There will be 900 new Black students on the Ann Arbor campus by Fall 1971;
- (2) That funding has been committed to insure at least 10% Black student population on the Ann Arbor campus by Fall 1973;
- (3) That funding will be made available to employ seven undergraduate recruiters and two additional personnel in the Financial Aids Office;
- (4) That funding will be made available to engage 3 full-time graduate recruiters. Moreover, assurances have been given that money equivalent to the funding of three additional full-time recruiters will be made available;
- (5) That another recruiter charged with the responsibility of significantly increasing the number of Chicano students on campus would be employed;
- (6) That an adequate budget would be provided to sustain and expand the Afro-American Studies Program and to provide the requested supportive services;
- (7) That two other demands, namely the creation of an Appeal Board on Financial Aid and revamping of the parents' confidential statement, were agreed upon;
- (8) That in the event of complaints against any participant in the strike, the accused shall have two options of redress. The first shall be through existing University procedures. The second is the right to request a hearing before an outside

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individual named by the President as an impartial and fair
arbiter.

Acceptable agreements were not achieved with respect to the Black Student Center and the collection of monies for the Martin Luther King Scholarship Fund which the students had voted in a referendum to assess themselves.

In spite of the failure to reach accord on the latter two demands, the BAM membership considered the agreements concluded to be a significant initial step toward the objective of making more educational opportunities available for Black people. Therefore the strike was terminated.

We are particularly proud of the non-violent manner in which the strike was conducted. We offer accolades to our membership for their self-sacrifice and moral dedication to the commitment of achieving a restructuring of the university without resort to, nay, without even consideration of violence. All those who in their indignant outrage labeled our movement as "violent" should now stop to consider the real confusion of meaning which they have brought to that term.

Let us again emphasize that this has been far from a total victory; No victors crown can yet be donned! We are still a people whose every step upward is met by massive resistance and subverted by irrational retaliation. But stride toward freedom we shall; our manhood shall be realized!