

## **Ex Com Retreat-1-96**

### **Introduction**

Amazing as it may seem,

...this is our 7th retreat

When we first conceived of the notion in 1994, objectives

...create a forum where U-wide issues could be discussed

in a thoughtful and deliberative fashion

...then taken to the units for further discussion

...finally moved through the Central Administration

for implementation

The Task Forces launched last term represent the

latest stage of this process

...working on matters that these retreats regarded as critical

...John Troupman will brief you on the efforts of one of these

...Task Force on the Organization of the University

...some exciting things to report to us

...you will see that these groups are working very hard

and bringing lots of exciting ideas to the table

...They are providing a wonderful opportunity to move forward

with changes designed to enhance our missions of

teaching and scholarship

### **Moving forward and change**

These are key themes I would like to address this morning.

Frank Popoff, CEO of Dow, noted to a small seminar group

...Spoke about succession planning and about the sorts of processes

that ought to characterize a change in leadership

...Made the point--a telling point--

that when succession planning grows out of a crisis event,

it is likely to be reflexive and dangerously precipitous

Although my announcement of the decision to step aside as president was a bit of a surprise...

...sometimes we have less control over the timing of such announcements that we would wish

... I did commit to staying through June of this year, so that I could provide the University with ample time to select a successor

...furthermore, in the past several months we have taken action to make certain that the executive officer team would remain in place and that key searches would move ahead

...we have also attempted to nail in place a number of the key initiatives launched during the past several years

- ...the Campaign for Michigan
- ...our efforts to rebuild the University
- ...our relationships with Lansing and Washington
- ...and important efforts such as
  - the Michigan Mandate, and
  - the Michigan Agenda for Women

...finally, as I have indicated on numerous occasions, although I am stepping aside this summer as president, I'm really only leaving the Fleming Building... (or should I say, being set free from the Fleming Building)

Anne and I are committed to remaining at Michigan and we will continue to work on behalf of the University

...and continue to be available to help in any way that we

Yet, any such announcement of a leadership change will inevitably have understandable side effects...

...there has been some pulling back from the larger mission of the University and focusing on local concerns...

...defending one's own turf

...there have been some sense of resignation

...as if nothing we do now matters since no real changes can effectively be implemented during this period of change.

There has also been an expression of anxiety concerning several of the important initiatives launched during the past several years, in particular

...the Michigan Mandate

...the Michigan Agenda for Women

...the Campaign for Michigan

I believe that all of these consequences are quite unproductive and I want to propose this morning that we work together--

...all of us

...to overcome them.

I believe in this University

...I believe in its mission

...and I believe in its people.

I am confident that it is possible for us to keep moving forward during this period of transition

...to make changes that will improve on what we are doing well

...and even to invent new ways of extending our mission

### **A Position of Great Strength**

As Harold Shapiro noted in his address to Senate Assembly in

October, there is no university in America today better positioned to face the challenges of our times or to lead higher education into the next century.

In fact, when the Provost Search Committee was screening candidates during the summer, they heard time and time again that the rest of higher education has both great respect--and, indeed--envy for the University of Michigan.

National rankings of the quality of the University's academic programs are the highest since these evaluations began several decades ago. A close examination reveals that the academic reputations of our programs have increased more than any other university in America over the past decade.

Further, when rankings across all academic programs and professional

schools are considered, four institutions stand apart:

Harvard, Stanford, the University of California, and the University of Michigan

Faculty salaries have been increased to highest among public universities (ranked #1) and competitive with the top private universities (ranked #5 - #8 overall). An "ebb and flow" analysis indicates we are not only retaining top faculty, but managing to recruit faculty from other institutions.

Applications for admission at all levels and in almost programs is at a record level.

Through the remarkable efforts of our faculty, the University passed MIT several years ago to rank as the nation's leading research university, attracting more federal, state, and corporate support (over \$400 M

in 1994-95) for our research efforts than any other university in America.

Despite the precipitous drop in state support over the past two decades, the University has emerged financially as one of the strongest universities in America.

It is the first public university in history to receive an Aa1 credit rating

by Wall Street.

With almost 18 months left in the Campaign for Michigan, we have already passed the \$950 million point...

...and Tom Kinnear promises me we will pass the original Campaign goal of \$1 billion this spring while I am still president and more than a year early

And, although the press likes to portray our efforts to seek funding from Lansing as a football game between Michigan and Michigan State, in reality we came out well ...appropriations above inflation (and likely to be strong again this year)

...removal of boilerplate limiting outstate enrollments

We are making substantial progress in our efforts to restructure the financial

and administrative operations of the University, including award-winning

efforts in total quality management, cost containment, and decentralized

financial operations.

A walk around the University reveals the remarkable transformation in our

environment as we approach the completion of our massive program

to rebuild, renovate, and update all of our buildings on campus--a \$1 billion effort funded primarily from nonstate sources.

The University Medical Center has undergone a profound transformation

placing it in a clear leadership position in health care, research, and teaching.

We have launched some exceptional initiatives certain to have great impact

on the future of the University and higher education more generally,

The Institute of Humanities

The Media Union

The Institute of Molecular Medicine

The Davidson Institute for Emerging Economies

The Tauber Manufacturing Institute

Through efforts such as the Michigan Mandate and the Michigan Agenda

for Women, we now have the highest representation of people of color and women among our students, faculty, staff, and leadership in our history.

Michigan has become known as a national leader in building the kind of diverse learning community necessary to serve an increasingly diverse society.

While other universities are hoping that they will be among the surviving research universities of the 20th Century, we have the opportunity to become among the first of the great universities of the 21st Century...

Summary

Through the effort of countless members of the University family,

most of the goals we set in the late 1980s have now been achieved.

Due to your efforts, by any measure, the University today is better, stronger, more diverse, and more exciting than at any time in its history.

### **The Need to Move Forward**

Again, to quote Frank Popoff,

...if we allow the presidential succession process to hamstring us, we risk losing the remarkable opportunities for leadership that we are uniquely positioned to provide.

We need to sustain our pace even as we pass the baton to the next administration

The challenges before us are not going to disappear...

...the organization of the University

...how to attract and retain outstanding faculty and students

...the faculty contract...rights and responsibilities

### **The Need to Concentrate on University-wide Issues**

We also need to set aside, at least through this transition period our parochial interests, our turf-sensitivity

After all, we are all first citizens of the University.

While we are indeed a highly decentralized institution,

we must not let this character become a source of atomization that threatens to cripple our best efforts.

Further, many of our most important efforts are related to societal imperatives...

...quality undergraduate education

...the Michigan Mandate

...the Michigan Agenda for Women

and our state, our nation, and the world depends on

our continued commitment to these efforts as a united institution.

And, of course, I think we all recognize the degree to which contemporary teaching, research, and service simply cannot be confined to traditional disciplinary units and instead must span the University.

**We must not allow the search process to distract us.**

It is, for the most part, an unprofitable diversion of our energies.

I am confident that a great institution will attract great leadership ...at all levels.

Our responsibility is to the mission of its University ...and to those we serve.

The success of the University is dependent to a great extent on our success in our appointed roles, and we need to focus on them.

**Concluding Remarks**

I am confident that the University of Michigan can move into the next century prepared and able to continue its leadership role among the great universities of the world.

I can assure you that I--and my administration--are determined to keep this University moving full-speed ahead for the next six months.

And, although I will be in the role of a "University-pusher" rather than a "University-leader" come this July, I've had 15 years of experience at putting my shoulder to the wheel and moving this institution ahead... ...and I am determined to keep right on pushing to



keep Michigan moving ahead.

I hope that you will join me

...and bend all of your energy

...and creative imagination to this effort.