

Ruth Simms Hamilton Collection
Conflicts - Case Studies - MSU - Conflict Chronology - MSU
1968 - 1969

FOLDER 34
BOX 2359
COLLECTION
UA 17269

Stan McClinton --- Vice President of Black Student Affairs ASMSW

saw his role as developing programs to affect changes in the University and to bring about a meaningful Black-white relationship. I will be addressing myself primarily to the demands of black students and minority groups because these groups have consistently been overlooked in educational institutions. I don't see this position as a forum to solicit symbolic rewards and gifts from the board or the University. I will not act to contain black students in this position. My primary goal is a meaningful change.

Spring, 1968, The Black Vice Presidency was first mentioned when student government leaders became aware of the lack of black involvement in student government in Black affairs.

April 4, 1969, Commemorating Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., Death, BSA suggested in a letter to the President and the Board of Trustees that

1. An existing structure be named in honor of Dr. King
2. Establishment of a Martin Luther King Memorial Scholarship fund
3. Creation of an endowed Martin Luther King Professorship in Social Philosophy

April 21, 1969 Sam Riddle and Jason P. Lovette- BSA presented several points for consideration by the board. The demands of 1968 urged the acceptance of more blacks in the MSU community and end to the awarding of contracts by the University to companies known to engage in discriminatory practices, more community Action Programs, and the initiation of a Black Studies Program. "These issues must be resolved," Riddle said.

Lovette presented seven matters for consideration by the board which he indicated should not be considered to be demands. His statement included

Praise for Robert Green and an endorsement of his appointment to the Position of Director of the Center of Urban Affairs

A call for increased numbers of blacks in various areas of the University community

A charge that black athletes are exploited for four years and cut loose without a degree

Criticism of work study programs that are more work than study

A call for disarming of University police

A request for a black student observer on the board of trustees and

Criticisms of ROTC as having no relevance to the academic community

April 24, 1969 --BSA urged that all programs involving minority groups and disadvantaged students be transferred to the Center for Urban Affairs from the Vice President to black affairs- Commented that " The Center for Urban Affairs would be more responsive to the needs of disadvantaged students and more capable of developing effective programs.

Black students because they have been kept separate from white society for most of their lives, will not fit nearly into an educational system designed primarily for whites.

Ordinary University Courses do not give them the information they need to effectively fight the problems then find wherever black people live

April 28, 1969 --Over 100 Black students shut down Wilson Hall cafeteria to protest the alleged harassment of three full time black employees. BSA said the three employees walked off their jobs because of comments of a racist nature by Joseph Trantham, food service manager and Jennie Miller, assistant food service manager.

Shortly before 5 p.m. Black students took over the cafeteria and refused to allow dinner to be served. The students plan to occupy the cafeteria until Thursday when they will hold an open forum with acting President, Walter Adams.

BSA listed 3 grievances:

1. The two food service managers be fired.
2. The University employ more full-time Black help.
3. That a worker who quits be hired to a position of responsibility

Prior to the sit-in the three black non-student employees who walked off their jobs present a list of grievances at a meeting with Trantham and South Complex supervisor. It was decided that the employers would get together and work out their grievances.

BSA CO

BSA conducted a teach-in and discussed among themselves problems related to black on this campus and other campuses. Riddle- "There have been overt and rather blatant actions on the campus against Blacks. Wilson cafeteria is the place we thought it would have to be stopped. Blacks do not want any physical confrontation and if the administration doesn't do its job to corral and throw out racist people like these, then, we're going to help make them". BSA statement further adds that the Black students at MSU consider the harassment of black employees a direct insult. ~~It is~~ Undoubtedly the University is only trying to buy Black students off. The University gives \$1.5 million which shows their commitment. However, this does not tell black students anything as long as blacks are being dehumanized.

"In the future--and this is a warning--when racism exists in a component of this institution, we will close that component down"- Robert L. Green 4-29-70.

(Hearing held in Wilson Cafeteria)

Joe Trantham---Elaine Mitchler, Carolyn Hatcher, Joleen Shane, and Roxie Triplett The adjudicating committee, composed of administrators, faculty, and students (4 whites- 4 blacks) met following the 3½ hour hearing. No decision was not reached. Recommendations would go to Dr. Adams before being made public. Further action by BSA will depend upon the outcome of the Committee's deliberation after 14 hours of negotiation, the special committee made nine recommendations. --April 30, 1969 in response to the BSA charges of racial harassment of Black Wilson Hall employees.

BSA initiated a sit-in Monday at Wilson Hall Cafeteria to protest the "dehumanization" of black full time employees and to expose racism in the university. It ended April 30, 1969. late Wednesday evening after the Committee's findings were released.

The black students refused to leave the cafeteria or allow meals to be served until the University acted on their recommendations. BSA expected the immediate termination of Joseph Trantham and Elaine Mishler, and an immediate commitment that all those who were harassed and abused by them be promoted.

1. A position be established for a black person in the central personnel office with the general function of recruiting black personnel and of getting them placed in the University structure. If it is necessary to give on-the-job training in some instances, this person should see that it is provided. The selection of this person shall be made with the advise of BSA and the Director of Equal Opportunity Programs and the Director of the Center for Urban Affairs
2. That immediate steps be taken to upgrade blacks in residence hall employment with on-the-job training if necessary.
3. That there be an immediate search for and subsequent hiring of a black college graduate to be trained for one of the management positions in Wilson Hall with the advise of the BSA
4. That the University administration releases a statement condemning the kind of practices which led to the Wilson Hall situation
5. That Miss Hishler be transferred out of Wilson Hall and placed in a permanent non-supervisory position
6. That Mr. Trantham be transferred out of Wilson Hall and placed in a permanent non-supervisory position in food services
7. That the President request some knowledgeable faculty member to formulate in conjunctions with all interested parties some plans for an arbitration system to adjudicate the sort of controversy involved in Wilson Hall
8. That the President request the faculty not to penalize the students involved in the Wilson Hall action
9. That a progress report be forwarded to the entire University including specifically the BSA and the Black Faculty and the above items on June 1 and Oct. 1, 1969

Dr. Adams commented that he felt there are three considerations people concerned about the Wilson Hall Cafeteria occupation should keep in mind 1. Nobody was hurt, and I think that's important 2. The academic process of this University was not disrupted 3. To my knowledge there was no BSA

BSA ---We Maintain that

There are not enough Black students at MSU

Black Faculty, administration, Black employees in the University including Police and Bus drivers etc.

Upgrading of Black personnel in all areas

We demand courses in Afro-American Studies: Music, art, Philosophy, History, Literature, political science, etc. We demand that the University take a stand on opening housing. We demand more non-athletic scholarships for Black students

-----Lansing Community-----Contracts

On April 26, 1968, A boycott of MSU's 38 Negro athletes of all spring sports events submitted a list of seven grievances to President Hannah and Athletic Director Biggie Munn protesting against discriminatory practices by the athletic Department toward Negroes. The group represented all undergraduate Negro athletes in all sports.

The seven grievances were

1. Recruit black coaches for all sports at the University such as basketball, baseball, track, and swimming. We dont feel that one or two black coaches ~~are~~ are insufficient.
2. The athletic department has a tendency of discourgging black students from participating in certain sports, especially baseball.
3. MSU dpes mpt employ black people in Jenison Field House, the intramural Build ing, the ticket office, and the Ice Arena in non professional positions. We find this to be deplorable and no longer acceptable.
4. MSU does not employ black trainers nor a black medical doctor to treat all athletes
5. Burt Smith the athletic counselor is under undue pressure attempting to assist all the athletes in academic and personal problems. A Black sthletic Counselor ~~on~~ should be employed to assist in s counseling. This need is highlighted by the fact that many blacks athletes ~~fail~~ fail
6. The academic counseling provided for by black athletes is designed to place them in courses that well maintain their eligibility and not to enable them to graduate at the end of the foru year period. Athletes are forced to take non-academic courses (such as P. E.) when they need academic courses which will ~~make~~ make them eligible for graduation.
7. MSU has never elected a black cheerleader. We find this questionable in view of the larger number of talented black girls on this campus.

A statement followed the grievances that "the black athletes of MSU

would like to go on record as suppoeting the 1968 olympics by black athletes

BSA AND BLACK ATHLETES issued joint statements to clarify their positions.

The joint statement said the black athletes called off their boycott of all Spring sports because the University agreed to "act immediately" on the demands of the black athletes..(after meeting with Dr. John Tuzah)

The following concessions were made

1. To move toward hiring another black football coach in the process of hiring a black track coach by Sept. 1, 1968
2. To make every effort to recruit black baseball players and swimmers
3. To discuss the question of a black Counselor ~~on~~ *All other demands met

BSA SUPPORTS POOR PEOPLES MARCH*****STATE NEWS MAY 17, 1968

June 26, 1968 (Barry Amis)

Jan. 1968 ----Lloyd Cafer B Prin. Mechanic, MSU Detroit Project, 67 students & 25 admitted each succeeding who --identify students who would have a good chance of succeeding at MSU, eventhough the normal MSU admission standards do not identify them as succeeding. Discarding the hackneyed platitudes, the university is saying in essence that by bringing these students is is to be applauded. Black students should not be d-----or brought off y by this kind of education tokenism. It will not break down the defacto segregation at MSU ~~(2)~~ (700MSU students out of 40,000

April 1968- College

Upon the death of Dr. Martin Luther King, April 4., 1968

BSA DEMANDS

1. More Negro students, coaches, doctors, professional counselors and administrators
2. University offer courses in Afro-American studies
3. University take a stand on open housing
4. More coaches, doctors, professional counselors residence hall personnel
5. Not award building contracts to companies known to discriminate in their hiring practices.

Original Demands

1. The upgrading of all Black personnel at the University in all areas
2. More non-athletic scholarships 3. Afro-Amer Studies 4&5? 6. University should develop a project for the black students of Lansing and take a greater interest in the Lansing Community