

BLACK STUDENTS 1968 ALLIANCE

ALL E.O.P. & OTHER CONCERNED
BLACK STUDENTS ARE INVITED TO
ATTEND AN INFORMAL "RAP SESSION"

TOPIC: NOMINATION & ELECTION OF E.O.P.
REPRESENTATIVES TO FACULTY COUNCIL.
SIX E.O.P. STUDENTS WILL PRESENT
POSITIONS AND DISCUSS GRIEVANCES OF
BLACK STUDENT BODY.

TIME: 7:00 P.M. TUES. NOV. 19^T

PLACE: SS 256

MUST ATTEND MEETING FOR ALL
CONCERNED BLACK STUDENTS

1/13/69

DEMAND NO. I: EFFECTIVE AS OF THE COMMENCEMENT OF SPRING SEMESTER 1969

WE DEMAND THE IMMEDIATE INSTITUTION OF AN AFRO AMERICAN HISTORY COURSE

- () A) This course is to be taught by a qualified instructor of our own choosing.
- B) This course is to be taught on the 200 level and no prerequisite course is to be required.
- C) Students enrolled in the above mentioned course must receive 3 full credit hours toward their normal academic requirements.

DEMAND No. II: EFFECTIVE AS OF THE COMMENCEMENT OF FALL SEMESTER 1969

WE DEMAND THE FORMATION OF A DEPARTMENTALLY AUTONOMOUS AFRO-AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAM

- A) THE above department will enable interested students to major in Afro-American Studies on both the undergraduate and graduate levels.
- B) Though the administration is expected to vigorously engage in helping arrange for this program, we demand the right to play the decisive role in both recruiting and screening of all potential instructors.
- C) The requirements for qualification, and the appointment of all potential instructors will be determined by a committee appointed by the BSA
- D) We further demand the right to play the decisive role in the structuring of the department's curriculum.

DEMAND No. III: EFFECTIVE AS OF THE COMMENCEMENT OF FALL SEMESTER 1969

WE DEMAND THE ENROLLMENT OF A MINIMUM OF 300 AFRO-AMERICAN, PUERTO-RICAN, AND OTHER NON-WHITE MINORITY GROUP STUDENTS.

- A) We further demand the right to participate in the recruitment of such students.

DEMAND No. IV:

THE AFOREMENTIONED DEMANDS ARE ABSOLUTELY NON-NEGOTIABLE AND WE DEMAND THAT THE ADMINISTRATION TAKE IMMEDIATE AND APPROPRIATE ACTION TOWARD INSURING THEIR IMPLEMENTATION.

THE PERSONAL SIGNATURES OF DESIGNATED MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATION SHALL BE AFFIXED TO THIS DOCUMENT AS AN INDICATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S INTENTION TO GRANT THESE DEMANDS:

M E M O R A N D U M

1-15-69

TO: All SUNYA Faculty

FROM: Jeffrey A. Smith, Anthropology

SUBJECT: Resolutions on the accession of the president to the demands of the Black Students Alliance.

The following resolutions are being circulated prior to their presentation at the next general faculty meeting, to be held Monday, February 3, 10 A.M., in the Campus Center Ballroom.

Whereas accession to the demands of the Black Students Alliance to "play a decisive role in both recruiting and screening all potential instructors" in a proposed Department of Afro-American Studies, and accession to the demands of the Black Students Alliance that "The requirements for qualifications and appointment for all potential instructors will be determined by a committee appointed by the BSA" opens the University to excessive pressures from groups outside the university community through the Black Students Alliance and, therefore, poses a grave threat to academic freedom.

Be it resolved that the faculty of the State University of New York at Albany instruct the University president to inform all parties involved, administrative, faculty, and student personnel, that no group save the University administration and faculty can "play a decisive role in recruiting and screening ... potential instructors" in any program or department at SUNYA, and that no group save the administration and faculty can determine the qualifications for appointment of potential instructors for any program or department at SUNYA.

Be it also resolved that the faculty go on strike beginning at some time and date mutually agreed upon by the faculty and terminate at such time as the president of the University takes the above action.

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The Executive Committee offers the following statement to Faculty Senate for its consideration:

Having reviewed the circumstances under which the "Demands" of the Black Students' Alliance were presented to President Collins on January 13, 1969, the Faculty Senate endorses the actions of the President as being in the best interests of the University.

Although the Senate expresses concern that normal channels of faculty participation appear to have been by-passed, it urges that fair and sympathetic consideration be given to the proposed changes, and requests the appropriate committees and councils to continue with their review of the proposals which have already been developed by the faculty.

VS.

THE SMITH MEMORANDUM

On Monday January 13, the Black Student Alliance presented the administration of S.U.N.Y.A. with a list of demands. The demands were agreed to by the administration and, according to the administration, were to be put into effect as soon as possible.

Following this, a faculty member at S.U.N.Y.A., Jeffrey Smith (Anthropology), sent a memorandum to other faculty members expressing his point of view concerning the demands signed by the administration. He seemed extremely displeased about one point in particular. That point being; the agreement of the University to the demand made by the Black Student Alliance that the final decision in the hiring of professors for the Black Studies Department (to be established according to another demand set forth by the B.S.A.) rests solely with the students. Mr. Smith has called for the University administration to back down from its position, especially on this one crucial point. If the University does not retreat from its stand, Mr. Smith proposes to call a general faculty strike, or a walkout of as many faculty members as possible (evidently very few at the present by Smith's own admission, in an article in the local paper he was quoted as saying that the response to a faculty strike was "minimal.")

Let us now analyze the position taken by Mr. Smith. It is quite evident that Mr. Smith does not think that the final decision concerning the hiring of faculty members for the new department being formulated should rest with the black students. Why does he hold such views? He does not think that these students are capable of making these decisions. They, in some way do not possess all the information needed to assess their future professors. Tell us Mr. Smith, do you, or does any faculty member, or administrator, or for that matter student possess the infinite wisdom needed to make the best choice (the only choice if one is all-knowing)? Of course not, the question is absurd. But, Mr. Smith does think that some are more qualified than others to make this decision. And in this particular case he obviously thinks that the faculty and administration are more qualified to make the final decision.

Just how qualified are the faculty and the administration to make the final decision in this case? How many faculty members or administrators have been raised in the filth of the ghetto or the slum? How many of these same people were born black? How many have been treated like scum for a better part of their lives? How many have been refused better jobs, better homes, and better educational opportunities because of their national origins? How many have been continually told, "Boy, don't rock the boat. We know what's best for you." ?

Do you Mr. Smith or does any group of faculty members or administrators feel that they are capable of making that final decision? Remember, you are not dealing with numbers any longer, you are being confronted with people; people who want a voice in their educational development, a voice in their lives.

What about a knowledge of a professor's scholarship, and a knowledge of how qualified he really is to teach a certain course? Isn't the faculty or the administration more suited than the student to make such a decision in this case? Let us take the case involving the B.S.A.. Before the demands were presented to the administration, the Black Student Alliance had already presented to some members of the administration a prospectus of the kind of course they would like to see taught. By the admission of the President of the University these ideas had just sat on someone's desk until he (the President) took action. Are we, Mr. Smith, going to allow the futures of these students to be nothing more than dust collectors on the desk of some lazy ~~XXXXX~~ official?



Who is more concerned about the courses to be given here, the black student's or that official?

It is also well known that the members of the Black Student Alliance have been in close contact with some of the leading authorities in New York State in their particular field (black studies). When the black students make a decision it will be, in the end, a decision that will influence the rest of their lives. If the faculty and administration make the final decision it may have at most a passing effect on them, but it will influence the lives of the students. There is no other alternative Mr. Smith, self-determination is the only solution.

Let us now proceed to another argument raised by Mr. Smith. If the B.S.A. gets their way it might then be possible for other groups, especially those groups politically inclined, with outside ties, to infringe upon academic freedom. First of all, let us not forget that faculty members who 'qualify' are granted tenure. Tenure is the sanctuary of the political, scientific, or other radically inclined person, but, it is also the sanctuary of the lazy. Let us be pragmatic for a moment and bring up another point. Is there any one political group on this campus that is in any way prepared or has the numbers to 'take over' any department on this campus and infringe upon the academic freedom of the professors. The answer again is quite obvious. No, there is no such student group. All your paranoia is useless.

We are prepared to meet, at any level, any steps taken by Mr. Smith and those who are in agreement with him. An attack against one is an attack against all. Let it be understood that there can be no compromise when the right of people to determine their own destinies is at stake.

YOUNG SOCIALIST ALLIANCE

Dear Brothers & Sisters:

Enclosed you will find information pertaining to the development of a Department of Afro-American Studies which will be officially operative at the State University of N. Y. at Albany as of September 1969. This department will offer degrees in Afro-American Studies at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. It might interest you to know that the development of this program, both in terms of curriculum and instructors, will be and is being largely determined by the interests of the Black Students, Alliance.

We are writing you in the hope that our program might stimulate interest among our brothers and sisters in various black organizations throughout this country. By evaluating the department curriculum as developed by the B.S.A. one can readily see that we are intent upon making this program as dynamic and as relevant as possible to the needs and interests of black people. We desire to make this program one of the strongest in the country since S.U.N.Y.A. is one of the major institutions in the entire State university system. We are currently in the process of recruiting the most together and dynamic black educators available to insure the program's success. We are, at present, in continued dialogue with the administration and are determined to see that our primary goals and intentions regarding the quality of the newly formed department will not be aborted in any way.

We would, therefore, appreciate your making available to the brothers and sisters all the necessary information regarding our program. Any and all students who might be interested in applying for admission to the newly formed department must contact us at once. Time has become a very crucial factor in organizing the entire program. All inquires can be addressed to:

DEPARTMENT OF AFRO-AMERICAN STUDIES
GRADUATE ADMISSIONS
STATE UNIVERSITY OF N.Y. AT ALBANY
SOCIAL SCIENCE BUILDING - RM. 235
1400 WASHINGTON AVE.
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12003

Hoping to hear from you soon, I remain

United in the struggle,

Fred Harris

Fred Harris
Member- Executive Council
Black Students' Alliance

WE WILL REACH THE PROMISED LAND

The slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King cannot be taken as a sad act contemplated by a sick person. The history of the black people in this country (the very recent history) tells us that this is the answer for their just struggle for freedom and dignity from this sick, racist society. The slaying of Evers, of the students in Orangeburg, of the mother of ten children in Newark and of hundreds of others of our black brothers and sisters, is the deed of this society, which is built on violence and injustice towards our people.

We have been listening to innumerable cries for law and order, but as always, there are two laws and two orders. We think that order breaks when the racist police forces are unleashed in the black community killing and humiliating our brothers and sisters. We think it is lawless when, in the long history of this country, not one of the slayers of black people has been punished. When a society fails to apprehend the murderers of a father of five, whose only crime was being promoted to a foreman's position never held by a black, such a society cannot blame its sickness and racism on individuals. We think Dr. King was murdered when this society was born.

We do not mourn for Dr. Martin Luther King because he is not dead--he lives in the causes for which he died. We will not cry for King; we will carry the banner of freedom on. His death will neither subdue us nor destroy our will to fight. We vow to avenge his murder and the murder of all other black people by waging a relentless struggle until we eliminate all forces of racism and oppression the world over.

THE BLACK STUDENTS' ALLIANCE