

1st Conference of '69

Exhibit A

SEQUENCE OF BSO INCIDENT MAY 1969

On Monday evening, May 12, the President of the College returned to his office at 7 p.m. after a flight in from Washington, D. C. He found on his desk the demands of the BSO with a deadline of 3 p.m. on Thursday, May 15. A casual perusal of the demands clearly indicated that they were striking at many fundamentals of the principles of the College and included several decisions that had previously been finalized. Aware of the fact that the coming Saturday was Mothers' Day, a time in which the same organization expressed itself in 1968, the seriousness of the situation was quite obvious.

For the next three hours he talked successively with individual administrators. A meeting of the administrative staff was called for the next morning, May 13, at 10 a.m. In this meeting the guidelines for reaching decisions were set forth, through which we would seek as full an involvement of campus leaders as possible. At 4 p.m. the President met with the Administrative Committee supplemented by the two presidents of the Student Commission, the presidents of the top faculty organizations, the Dean of the Chapel, and our Black professor. In a two and a half hour session we worked out the basic pattern of our replies. A writing team of Deans Barrett, Long, Stavig and Chen worked with the President in the drafting of the replies.

Since the Black demands were to be published in the Index, it became obvious that our replies necessarily had to be distributed to an entire College community. Therefore when we handed to the co-chairmen of the BSO our replies, we distributed both manuscripts to the entire College community. — Exhibit B

Since the demands became known campus-wide, the President opened his door for one and all who wished to express himself. It became obvious that the BSO represented one group. There was a second group which strongly supported anything which the Blacks demanded, but there was a sizable quiet but determined group of white backlash. There then was the large majority who were not deeply troubled and appeared to be neutral.

The Student Commission likewise was concerned and sought to find some method of quieting the situation. It met twice and weakened considerably on its strong position to have all funds for BSO channeled through its office. On Thursday evening the President of the College met with the group following the play. With the approval of the Commission the President called an all-campus meeting at 10 a.m. (a free hour) on Friday morning. At that time the administration explained in more detail its responses and answered questions from the floor.

EXAC — On Saturday morning the 17th, Mothers' Day, the Student Commission came out with a position paper urging peaceful protest on the part of the Blacks and setting forth an even more permissive plan than the Blacks had demanded. Basically, however, both plans are asking for individual self-determination in College policies and individual actions.

At 2 p.m. the leaders of the BSO appeared before the opening of the Mothers' Day concert and read the following brief statement addressed to the President:

"Your reply to our demands was totally inadequate. We reject it. Your response is evidence that the racism that permeates American society is present in the administrators and the faculty of this college. Our demands must be met by 6 p.m. Saturday, May 17, 1969."

The letter was then delivered to my home just before the Mothers' Day reception at the house. I was located at the baseball game and returned at once to the campus. We gathered together all available administrators and the two student presidents. All agreed that there was no way in which we could change our position by 6 p.m. We therefore drafted a memo which we delivered to BSO at 5 p.m. in which we said that no answer could be given but asked that their leaders come over to the office and talk with me at 5:15. Three leaders (Ed Taliaferro, Herb Lindsay, Jerry Weaver) did come and we spent an hour and fifteen minutes together. Nothing was solved but at least we talked and discussed things quietly and the Blacks got some of their "hang-ups" off of their mind.

In the interim, we had been in communication at once without attorneys, with the Chairman of the Board, and with others who might be needed. We laid plans for a complete take-over of the campus either at the Mothers' Day Banquet or later. We made arrangements for an injunction and for calling the police, though all recognized that this is the most difficulty and the most volatile act which can be taken.

At approximately 7 o'clock, during the banquet, a delegation of 25 Blacks came up through the kitchen into the main dining hall, walked west to the elevated stage where all but two leaders remained in one line. The two leaders then walked east to the middle section of the dining hall to the speakers' table. I jumped up with microphone in hand and asked if they wished to speak. I then brought the group to order and said that the BSO did wish to make a statement and that we should give them our complete attention. Their representative, Emmett Deans, spoke briefly and then the group departed after giving the Black counterpart of the Heil Hitler salute.

This statement is being transcribed on Monday morning, May 19, when all appears temporarily peaceful.

WKH:kns