

Meeting in President Jamrich's Office
January 8, 1970
2:17 P. M.

Present: Black students, David Williams, Melvin Payne and Arnold Avant, all of whom are members of the Human Rights Commission; members of the administration, including administrative officers in the Student Personnel Division; members of the Academic Senate; officers of the Associated Students of Northern Michigan University.

Dr. Jamrich:

The purpose of this session is to present the response to the black students' request as contained in Mr. Williams' letter of this morning in which he, in the last sentence, requested that these students be granted complete amnesty. Let me read the letter and, if there is any discussion, I would be pleased to carry it on. I thought there were going to be more black students here.

Mr. Williams:

Only the black students who sit on the Human Rights Commission are here.

Dr. Jamrich:

(Reads the letter to Mr. Williams.)

Mr. Williams:

First off, in my letter I don't ask for leniency, I asked for amnesty. I'm not begging anyone for anything. Second, I would like to know if this goes to the judicial procedure, who is going to be the persons you will send us to? Are we supposed to go before the white people again? Are we going to go back in front of these people, or are we going to have a fair trial?

Dr. Jamrich:

You will get a fair trial.

Mr. Williams:

Charles Griffis didn't get a fair trial from an all-white jury.

Dr. Jamrich:

In my opinion, Charles Griffis took advantage of the full judicial process of this university and received a fair trial in the balance.

Mr. Williams:

(He disagreed about the above statement.)

Dr. Jamrich:

Everything is a possibility. In this case I am not willing to accept this. I think the demonstration of the Student Judiciary Committee action is adequate proof that they will give a full and careful hearing to black or white. If after the hearing there is discrimination with reference to the Student Judiciary, we will seek the advice of the Human Rights Commission.

Mr. Williams:

The Human Rights Commission did a very good job. You didn't take the advice and do what you told us you would do. In other words we can take it to the Human Rights Commission, and we can just let it take the same procedure.

Dr. Jamrich:

We placed the matter into the appeal procedure.

Mr. Williams:

We feel that we did not get a fair trial from a white jury, and we want black representatives trying us. That's getting toward being fair. As long as we have to go before an all-white group, the Black Students Association is going in front of exactly the same group that tried Charles Griffis.

Dr. Jamrich:

The Human Rights Commission analyzed the trial and found irregularities about this trial. I didn't read about the Student Judiciary being biased about it. It is like any other court. We may not like the decision. You may not be satisfied with the due process of the judicial court. The Charles Griffis case is closed. As far as I'm concerned, it is taken care of properly in a satisfactory way by which the lower group found him guilty and the upper group found him not guilty. We are going to proceed with the set judicial process, and that is the reason for the last paragraph. You know, and the men around this table know, that I am aware of and concerned with the problems regarding the black students on this campus. Therefore, I added that last paragraph. If at any time it appears that the judicial system is not doing everything possible, we still have the Human Rights Commission to go to.

Mr. Williams:

We don't like the way it operates. Is it the way you want it to operate? We felt that the very first step was prejudiced because we had no black students.

Dr. Jamrich:

I would have to review for you the conversation of December 17 when the point was made very clear that black students had been contacted about membership on the Student Judiciary. I would have to defer it to Jack LaSalle and Harry Campbell.

Mr. Williams:

Why did you pick these two black students (named the two individuals)? In what capacity do you feel they were qualified? How were they notified?

Mr. LaSalle:

Because I knew them from a class I was in. We sent them letters.

Mr. Williams:

Why didn't you come to the organization?

Mr. Campbell:

We tried to make it a policy to contact no individual group. We agreed that the larger the number of people who applied, the better the group will be. There were no black students who applied.

Mr. Williams:

None of the black students saw your signs.

Mr. Campbell:

It was an acceptable arrangement since they were made public to all, except with the two letters.

Mr. Williams:

You picked out people to send letters to. You handpicked these people. The main concern is that there were no black students on the Student Judiciary. He handpicked two blacks to send letters to. Why didn't he send me a letter, or didn't he want any militants on the committee?

(Further discussion between Mr. Williams and Mr. Campbell.)

Mr. Williams:

He handpicked two people who he evidently didn't mind having on there. Why wasn't the whole black community made aware of this?

I don't think it was an exclusive measure. I don't think it is fair to select two black students for the court. Why didn't you ask if those two black students might be interested?

Mr. Campbell:

There was a posted sign for black and white to read that these positions were open.

Mr. Williams:

We contend that there were no signs.

Can you show proof that those signs were posted where black students would see them? Proof that these black students passed by and saw the signs?

Mr. Campbell:

They were put in front of the Dean's Office and in the University Center. About fifteen of them.

Mr. Williams:

Were they put in the dormitories?

Mr. Campbell:

I don't know if they were posted in the dormitories.

Mr. Williams:

Black people spend about 85% of their time in the dorms. A lot of black students don't spend any time in Kaye building.

Mr. Avant:

We are losing sight of the issue. Where do we go from here? Maybe we can deal with correcting the judicial process. We have a group of people sitting across the hall waiting for a decision. They should know the answers to dealings they are in. I'm here from the Human Rights Commission and want some information to give to those people.

Dr. Jamrich:

They will just have to be tried.

Mr. Williams:

Who and on what charges?

Dr. Jamrich:

The charges and who they will be are to be specified at the beginning of next week.

Mr. Williams:

Will it be against all 96? Or will it be against the 24?

Dr. Niemi:

Against the 24.

Dr. Jamrich:

I believe so.

Mr. Williams:

Why 24, and why not the 96?

Dr. Niemi:

Twenty-four people were identified.

Dr. Jamrich:

The university and people involved are in a position to deliver the charges and people to be charged. There is no obligation on the part of the university to include the 96. Twenty-four were recognized by the people in drawing up the charges, and we are sure this is proper and legal. Ninety-six is not necessary or essential from the university's view.

Dr. McClellan:

Dr. Niemi, did you indicate the investigation was fairly well completed? You might have been ready to proceed on Monday before the letter came from the black students. Why do the proceedings have to start next Monday?

Dr. Niemi:

The investigation was pretty well completed before the statement was received, and the only thing we are obviously concerned with is who is involved.

Dr. McClellan:

Is there any reason to wait until Monday? Can we press the charges and begin tomorrow morning?

Dr. Jamrich:

Dr. Kafer, did you indicate that they have one more step to take? That is, the association of the charges with each person. It would take at least another day.

Dr. Kafer:

Before hearings could begin to take place, we will prepare to initiate a statement of charges and contact the people whom the charges are being made against.

Dr. McClellan:

Could this be started tomorrow morning?

Dr. Kafer:

If we can get the papers cranked up.

Mr. Williams:

Can we ask the same question as we asked the County Prosecutor or detective? Can it be arranged that you list the names and charges and they be given to Dr. Rombouts and he, in turn, give me the names and charges and I contact them?

Dr. Niemi:

The procedure is that the Dean of Students Office is to contact each individual student, call him in, and discuss the charges he is being charged with.

Mr. Williams:

Can we have the same agreement as with the warrants? We don't want the school to contact us. We want a black student to contact us.

Dr. Jamrich:

What did the County Prosecutor and you agree to?

Mr. Williams:

What they are going to do is to call Dr. Rombouts, and he will call me and I am going to sit down with the detective and he will tell me the names and we are going to get the people and go to the police station. Can we do the same thing here?

Dr. Jamrich:

Do you mean come in and be in the office? Dr. Niemi?
Dr. Kafer?

Dr. Niemi:

Normally, we prepare a statement of charges and ask the student to come in and give it to him.

Mr. Williams:

Can you give it to Dr. Rombouts?

Dr. Niemi:

Just the names of the people?

Mr. Williams:

I would bring the people in one at a time and do it as you would do it normally.

Dr. Niemi:

No problem. We have to give them the statement of charges.

Dr. Jamrich:

No middle person can issue the warrant unless they are deputized.

Dr. Niemi:

We will give Dr. Rombouts a list of names. Dr. Rombouts will get in touch with Mr. Williams. You will bring the person to our office.

Dr. Jamrich:

This is to receive the statement of charges.

Mr. Williams:

What body will try them?

Dr. Jamrich:

The Faculty-Student Judiciary -- the second appeal court.

Mr. Williams:

Am I correct in saying that this body will decide guilty or innocent with no interference from the administration.

Dr. Jamrich:

Just like the last case.

Dr. McClellan:

This doesn't eliminate the appeal process.

Mr. Williams:

Who can we appeal to?

Dr. Niemi:

The appeal would go to me normally, but I have asked to be removed from it.

Dr. Jamrich:

It would go to me or someone I designate.