



Newly elected BSM chairman Willie Mebane talks to Black students during the regular general body meeting in Upendo.

Minutes from BSM meeting

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Staff writer

Still on the job and alert to the oppression of Blacks, Indians, and other minority groups, getting walking papers together to stampede Raleigh with the Tuscaroras the following day, and still smarting from the scrape of Wounded Knee, the BSM held its last pow wow of the school year on Thursday night, April 12, 1973. Chairman Warren Carson presided for the last time, pressing on in dealing with issues and problems dealing specifically with UNC Blacks.

Rapping on the theme of unity, Richard Matthews was up from Shaw University to challenge Blacks to join with Indians in a rally and march from Shaw to the Capitol on Friday 13. Speaking of luck! Warren Carson spread word that Kittrell College's Library has been gutted by fire, and urged UNC students to do "anything we can to help." Due to the fact that any surplus literature of bloods at UNC was hopefully absorbed in the Upendo book drive, Val Batts, new Minister of Information, suggested raising money as well as sending communiques to sororities (including our own new superfly Delta Sigma Theta Chapter) in an appeal to their philanthropic inclinations, with the astute observation that "at least it looks good on their records." Warren Carson also called on the united souls of Black folk to attend the African Liberation Day rally, May 26, to exhibit support for Pan Africanism, and decide on future goals.

In spite of its being tax time, or perhaps because of it, much of the BSM's conversation and rhetoric centered around money. Green and springtime fresh. Most discussion was centered around Nixon's cutbacks in federal funding, and, hitting close to home, cutbacks in financial aid to college students. Richard Matthews disclosed that Shaw might have to lock its doors, and hinted that a lot of UNC's own might have

to "put it in the want ads for jobs" rather than pack up books and bad rags next fall if that money doesn't come through.

Warren Carson and Larry Nixon, already thoroughly disgusted at the reduction in incoming Black freshmen, partially attributable to monetary deficiencies, suggested intercollegiate protests, and a letter writing campaign, to say nothing of keeping fingers crossed, to alleviate the situation.

With the shoe finally on the other foot, Warren Carson took a few minutes out for the lighter side of business to reprimand, berate, and in a few choice words, to literally excoriate the shiftless, lazy, downright no-good white help in charge of the upkeep of Upendo, represented at present by the non-impressive personage of redneck janitor Ed Childs. It seems that "Ed", as the Black folks around here address him, when necessary, didn't want to wash windows, polish furniture, or scrub floors for the Black Center. Imagine that! Instead he felt the duties should be delegated to the Brothers on work study. Anyway, Warren Carson made it perfectly clear that things had better get cleared up with Ed. Soon!

Willy Mebane, introduced as the new Chairman of the BSM promptly jumped to his duties, taking over Carson's old desk, gavel, and parliamentary procedure. Commenting that the BSM is "for Black people," "must be responsive," and "offers something for the money" in dues, Mebane characterized his new programs as "forceful." Outlining broad new programs for the fall, and a host of activities for incoming freshmen, including "a list of professors not to have," and a movie "Black Roots," it was obvious that Willie Mebane captured the spirit of Warren Carson at least. The question remains: Can anyone recapture Warren's mouth?!

More Power!

Ex-BSM chairman

'We must survive'

Warren Carson, Jr.
BSM Chairman

Struggle to Survive—a concept adopted by many Black organizations. How does this concept relate to BSM? Looking back over this past year and evaluating BSM endeavors, struggle is evident, but survival remains uncertain.

First of all, we are still an organization without any written ideological guidelines. During a most crucial period, the lack of an ideology was something that helped BSM considerably, though now that we are apparently approaching a transitory stage in our struggle, this fact could prove to be more of a detriment than a positive force. Without a list of set rules to follow, BSM was free to explore certain possibilities that would have otherwise been off-limits.

The period during which we have operated without a documented ideology or doctrine—5 years to be exact—has given us ample time to explore all segments of society, determine which of these are useful to the Black struggle, and set our course of action accordingly. Exploration in itself was a struggle.

Oftentimes we were met with hostility, which was not in any sense pleasant, but interesting. This one phase we have survived, but now the time has come for us to tighten our organizational structure. We know what we want, we know how to get it. The simple task before us is to write it down, stick to it, and make it work.

Secondly, the BSM is a representative organization by its mere composition. Black students are represented in most other areas of campus activity. Realizing first of all that representation was not necessarily power, but at the same time, that in over seventy-five representative positions there must be some potential power, a Black Caucus was formed under a BSM directive.

The format of the Caucus was to culminate all positions held by Blacks on campus into some type of organized, corresponding body. During the past year, the Caucus has functioned not only as a correspondence unit, but as a support base also.

With these positions mobilized and the amount of power determined, correspondence maintained, and a general understanding that Blacks must struggle together, through the Black Caucus a split among the Black student representatives was avoided. Thus in an effort to avoid an administrative division, we have survived.

Many people have posed the questions "What has BSM done for me?" and "What programs are beneficial?" Certainly this year the BSM has offered more speakers and programs than before. Various speakers have appeared on campus through our courtesy—Julius Chambers, Larry Little, and Dwight Womble, to mention a few. As well, programs for North

Carolina Political Prisoners, Sickle-Cell Anemia Detection, various cultural programs, and yes, parties have been held—sponsored by BSM.

Of course, every program did not appeal to every person at every time. Thus and such was never the reasoning of the BSM Central Committee. The idea behind such a varied program was hopefully to appeal to some with one program, to others with a different one, and to titillate the sensibility of another shared-interest group with still another event.

The only prerequisite that any program required was a mere pertinence to the Black Struggle. Even so, I dare say that some were displeased, and those who remain so probably don't realize the difference anyway. In the area of active participation and involvement on the part of Black students at large, we certainly have not survived, but neither has the situation gotten so far out of hand that there is no solution.

We must keep struggling to avert this crisis—we must survive.

Another major struggle which the BSM has been involved in was the struggle for recognition among the University Administration as an active Black student organization, aware of the many problems which plague us, and seriously dedicated to working toward a satisfactory solution.

There was strong indication during 1971-72 that BSM was perceived by the Administration as a bunch of hotheads who only thought in terms of striking a match to South Building or knocking down the Old Well. During this past year, several factors have indicated that perhaps the Administration does take BSM more seriously.

Upendo Lounge, for example, was not granted to Black students because the Administration felt sorry for those poor, neglected Black students who had nothing to call their own, etc. Rather, due to the innovative ideas offered by BSM concerning a Black student lounge, and the persistent pursuit in making the idea a reality, what was an infrequently used room in Chase Cafeteria is now an important part of Black student life at Carolina.

In addition, a recent bill passed by the Student Legislature will prevent the University from choosing any representative for Black students without BSM approval. We are serious—we do mean business—this we have proved—this struggle we have survived.

The major struggle that BSM is still faced with is the struggle for unity among ourselves. With a Black population as diverse as we have here, with so many different conceptions, or misconceptions, the fact still remains that we are all Black, all victims of an oppressive society, and hopefully, all concerned with reaching the ultimate goal of complete liberation for all Black people.

Yet we continue to vigorously compete with each other, instead of directing that

energy toward freedom. It is apparent that we are not "Brothers and Sisters in the Struggle" in the true sense of the phrase, for obviously if we were, unity would not be a question.

This is indeed a grave problem, for in the words of a contemporary "without linkage, there will be slippage," which means, of course, if we don't have unity, we are doomed to fail in all endeavors.

I have heard that it is impossible to please everyone. Perhaps this holds great truth. But inasmuch as the problems encountered by one Black affects every other Black, there must be some common ground on which we can unify.

On many previous occasions, I have pondered upon the question "What would it take for Black people to unify?" At times I've felt that it would take nothing short of a massacre in the Pit—Alabama style; at other times, perhaps only the snap of the finger.

Presently, strong indication prefers the former idea, but I have not given up hope that through some shape, form or fashion, we will realize our predicament, unify, and move. As another contemporary puts it "We damn sho' can make it if we try."

Perhaps the primary reason for this lack of unity is a lack of the necessary realization of the plight of Black people. The situation in Chapel Hill is a unique one, but only because we focus attention on the immediate problems facing us as Black students in a predominantly white environment.

These problems in fact bear the same origin as the problem of poor housing conditions for Blacks, lack of jobs, lack of adequate medical facilities in the Black ghetto, and so on. With a liberation movement, it would seem only normal that Blacks would face the reality of oppression and support the cause.

However, our situation is far from this ideal point of view. What we see here are black brothers and sisters clad from head to toe in the Liberation colors of Red, Black and Green, but when asked to tutor a young brother or sister who is trying to make it—"Nah, Brother Man, I ain't got the time."

This brings us to a basic misconception of Black Pride vs. Black Vanity. Black Pride is what you think of yourself; Black Vanity is what you would have others think. For those ill-informed ones, Red, Black, and Green is not enough—WE'VE GOT TO HAVE UNITY!

It cannot be over-emphasized that this need for unity is of paramount importance. It is a challenge for the next BSM Chairman to meet. Furthermore, it is a challenge for the next Central Committee to maintain that which we have gained and add to it, not destroy it.

The situation at hand also presents a challenge to the general Black student body—to become active participants in BSM functions, for if you are

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