

Central Committee makes statement

## Many BSM goals met

The following statement has been endorsed by members of the Black Student Movement Central Committee.

As the 1982-83 BSM year nears end, it appears many of the accomplishments made during the Watson administration have been overshadowed by controversy. We feel it is important to point out those accomplishments, lest they be forgotten.

- Under Watson's leadership, the BSM was able to present an organized budget to the CGC for the 1982-82 year.

- In addition, the BSM Gospel Choir received the largest allocation of funds in its entire ten-year history.

- The Central Committee initiated efforts to reunite the BSM's performing groups (dancers, readers/theater, choir) with the BSM by: creating a Central Committee position (Performing Arts Coordinator, whose duties were already stated in the BSM constitution but under the Cultural Coordinator's position) that would be a liaison between the BSM governing body and its performing groups. (All other BSM subgroups are already represented on the CC).

- In April 1982, Watson coordinated a very successful BSM Awards program which was attended by a cross-section of the larger campus community.

- During 1982 the BSM initiated reorganization of dorm representatives such that a network for BSM communications and dissemination of information could be more efficient.

- BSM's old constitution requires that at least 12 CC positions be filled by "elected" officers. However, only five of the 12 positions were filled in this manner, two of which were write-ins. No one ran for the other positions. In an effort to maximize participation in the BSM, Watson filled the remainder of these positions by appointment. As a result, for the first time in at least four years, all CC positions were filled.

- When the religious nature of the BSM Gospel Choir was challenged by CGC in the Spring of 1982, BSM funding for 1982-83 was jeopardized. Because the law prohibits the use of state funds for religious activities, the BSM Central Committee was forced to require the BSM's subgroups (performing and non-performing) to remove "religious trappings" (i.e. prayers, testimonies, religious symbols on publicity, etc.) so that the BSM could freely request and use state funds.

- Watson participated in WRAL-TV special program regarding the effects of Reagan's budget cuts on financial aid to students. (Watson's contribution, in particular, received very positive responses from both BSM and non-BSM constituents).

- Watson appointed BSM liasons to the Black American Law Student Association, Black Athletes, Black Greek Council, African Student Association, Black Faculty/Staff Caucus, and Association of Women Students.

Other more tangible accomplishments are evident in the various subgroups, for instance:

In *Black Ink* there has been:

- a significant improvement in quality.
- editorials that address BSM issues.
- increased readership.
- staff increased and is more organized.
- issues that have been printed more regularly and on schedule.
- advertisements have increased.

In Membership Committee:

- application process improved with streamlined application and cards mailed directly to members.

On the Political Committee:

- a voter registration drive was completed with Student Government.

On the Cultural Committee:

- a Coronation Ball was planned and executed.

- Martin Luther King, Jr. commemoration program was planned and executed.

The On-Campus Coordinator:

- planned and executed recruitment and orientation events for Project Uplift, National Achievement and Pre-Orientation.

The Parliamentarian/Constitution Committee:

- completed revision of BSM's constitution.

The Upendo Lounge Supervisor:

- added a new pool table to Upendo Lounge.

- planned rap sessions.
- began quiz files.

The attacks against Watson, are unfounded and may be the latest in the historical anti-BSM campaign. Similarly the student government's move to recall the BSM election is a paternalistic measure designed to control the BSM and other student groups.

Watson, who we feel was singled out for attack, was perhaps more vulnerable for attack because she was black and female, but her record as administrator speaks in her favor.

As Vice-Chair (March-December 1981).

- catalyst behind efforts to increase BSM dues-paying membership from August 1981 to March 1982.

- compiled and established an administrative file.

- initiated and implemented necessary procedures to obtain the larger office quarters currently being used by the BSM.

- responsible for organized BSM budget request to the CGC last Spring semester.

- responsible for the procurement of additional telephones and telephone lines for the BSM (including the *Black Ink* office).

- planned and coordinated 1981 retreat which resulted in intraoffice treasury regulations, description of duties for Miss BSM, membership regulations and other proposals for organizational improvements.

- established rapport with Black Alumni Association.

- co-ordinated the 1981 BSM Awards Banquet with the former Vice-Chair.

- co-founded the BSM Political Committee.

- actively supported the increase and tenuring of minority faculty members.

As Interim Chair (January-March 1983).

- officially assumed the position of Interim BSM Chair on January 1, 1982 (upon resignation of BSM Chair to run for Student Body President).

- problem inherited: of the 13 Central Committee (CC) positions, only 2 (Chair and recently appointed

Treasurer) were filled. Vacant positions were: secretary, vice-chair,

minister of information, political committee chair, cultural committee chair, performing arts coordinator, on-campus coordinator, off-campus coordinator, upendo board supervisor, *Black Ink* editor and parliamentarian.

- pending the regular BSM elections in March, Watson appointed three executive assistants to aid her in administering her duties and filled the vacant positions on the CC with interim officers.

- initiated and coordinated BSM's first annual MLK, Jr. birthday commemoration program.



### From the Typewriter by Teresa Blossom

February is Black History Month. Although we are 41 days and a few odd hours into the new year, now seems an appropriate time to take a look at black America and see how the nation's largest minority population is faring.

One thing appears certain: blacks may not hold that statistical number two spot much longer. According to data from the Bureau of the Census, the 1970s may aptly be tagged the Decade of the Immigrant, with the number of immigrants admitted to the United States in 1977, 1978 and 1979 outpacing those for any year since 1924.

Asians and Pacific Islanders made up the largest group who followed the age-old beckon of the Statue of Liberty's promise of freedom and economic prosperity. Their numbers increased a staggering 127.6 percent. And most of them headed west to California or the sun belt in the South.

However, for the time being at least, it is not the Asians who may unseat blacks as the nation's largest minority. Despite their dramatic increase, the 3,500,636 Asians won't topple the nearly 26.6 million blacks living in the country. If it can be done, the group most likely to do it will be of Spanish origin.

The country's Hispanic population is swelling, due in part, demographers say, to high fertility rates. During the 1970s, the number of Mexicans, Cubans and Puerto Ricans grew by 61 percent to 14.6 million. Observers predict that by 1990 when the next census is taken, the combination of high Hispanic fertility rates and immigration will quickly close the present gap of 12 million people between them and blacks.

It is hard to say if these figures translate into bad news for blacks. Historically, blacks have used their numbers as a voting ace with politicians. While the population data is imperfect at best (many people hide from census-takers or simply lie about the number of people living in a home), precise figures on those registered to vote are hard to come by.

The black family portrait has not changed much in 10 years. Nearly half of all black children lives in a single-parent home and black women still outnumber black men as the heads of households. The pregnancy rate among unwed teens is still high at 86 percent. A major factor in the high rate of births among poor unmarried blacks is low aspirations created by the absence of good schools and few job prospects.

This is very bad news since the climbing rate tends to perpetuate itself. An unwed teen mother is more likely to have a second illegitimate child before her 20th birthday. She, of course, will have to drop out of school and go on welfare. Odds are high that her daughter will manage to avoid the same cycle.

While the national recession is hard on everyone, blacks and other minorities are suffering disproportionately. Current figures put black unemployment at 15 percent, with record joblessness among black teenagers. This year, only one in five blacks is employed.

Out of the dismal joblessness figures, some good news emerges. Blacks have jobs in the 1980s which were closed to them during the previous decade. There are more black pilots, health administrators, bankers and other professionals.

However, upscale occupational gains have not been great enough to diminish the number of blacks who still live below the poverty level — defined as an annual income of \$9,287 for a family of four. Of the more than 30 million Americans living below the poverty level, 34.2 percent are black.

Blacks and the judicial system are still on bad terms. In 1982, almost half of the 400,000 people in jail were black. Also, victims of violent crimes, like murder, are most likely to be a black male between 20 and 24.

Not a very heartwarming picture.