

FACT-FINDING COMMITTEE ON EVENTS ON THE FONTBONNE
COLLEGE CAMPUS ON OCTOBER 24 TO 27, 1970

November 6, 1970

INTRODUCTION

In an attempt to establish the events of October 24-25, 1970, the committee interviewed many persons. We found it necessary in the very short time allotted to center our attention on the critical events that occurred. As a result, minor, unnecessary details are not included. With reference to this, we realize that some of the people who spoke to us may feel disappointed in respect to some of the omissions. We are satisfied that we have omitted nothing substantive. We are chiefly guided by the desire to be constructive. Without exception, all those who spoke to us were cooperative, open, and courteous. For this we are very grateful.

We wish to emphasize that we neither made nor intended any judgments. To some readers, it may appear that interpretations were made. We realize that a report of this nature is subject to this risk; to interpret statements was not our intention.

Faced with such a mass of information, we have organized the report according to the following plan:

1. Chronology of events

2. Commentary on some of the reasons for actions taken on October 24-25, 1970, and on the revocation of the suspension on October 27, 1970
3. Events related to the problems prior to October 24-25, 1970

(signed)
Pat Beard, Chairman

(signed)
Dr. Russell McMahan, Jr.

(signed)
Sister Geraldine Haas, Secretary

(signed)
Rose Mary Sloan

(signed)
Mrs. Carol Gilster

(signed)
Pat Schmittgens

(signed)
Reverend Sean Quinlan

(signed)
Sister Mary Liguori Tackaberry

(signed)
Sister Anne Brotherton

S E C T I O N I

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

Shortly before 9 a.m. on the morning of October 24, 1970, Kathy Batiste and Coelette Lemelle, black resident students in Southwest Hall, requested Sister Marie Damien's signature on "late" cards. The cards stated that the students would be out until 5 a.m. on Sunday, October 25, 1970. The two students, together with five other dorm students--Yolande Nicholson, Gwendolyn Perry, Sharon Walker, Jeannette Gauda and Rita Hunt--left their room keys with another student, Karen Floyd. After joining Antoinette Smith, the eight approached Fontbonne Library at about 9:15 a.m., carrying shopping bags containing food, books, and a chain. Upon entering the front doors of the library, the students wound the chain around the panic bars of these doors and fastened it with a padlock.

In the library at this time were Sister Alberta Anne Ruys, Sister Anne Berenice Whalen, Sister Mary Frances Fitzgerald, and a student assistant. After the library doors were chained, the spokesman for the black students, Yolande Nicholson, asked Sister Alberta Anne for the library keys and requested that the sisters leave the library. Sister Alberta Anne refused both requests. According to Sister, she was told

that the black students planned no harm to the library if they were given the keys, but, if refused, would call for help from boys from several other schools. Sister reported that Miss Nicholson said that she felt sure that the boys would not respect the library, as they were not students at Fontbonne College and did not have the interest the girls had. The sisters, who had decided to remain in the library, asked the student assistant who was in the workroom to leave the library via the Lewis Room door, which had not yet been blocked. For the next two hours, the students occupied themselves with barricading all exits. The inner front doors were covered with brown paper, and several pictures and posters were displayed there. During this time, the students also made approximately three phone calls, according to Sister Anne Berenice. The students later stated that these calls were to their parents and relatives.

Administration was first notified of the situation in the library through phone calls from Sister Alberta Anne and Sister Mary Frances. These calls were placed shortly after the take-over. Because they were off campus at the time, Sister Roberta Schmidt, college president, was not informed of the situation until her return at 11 a.m., and Sister Ruth Margaret Raupp, dean of studies, was not informed until her return at 7:15 p.m.

At about 11:10 a.m., the sisters in the library, under instruction from administration, gave a master key to the students and left the library. The library remained under observation by various administrators

in Ryan Hall until 2:50 p.m. At about 1 p.m., Cookie Helbling, president of the student body, phoned the library and spoke with Yolande Nicholson, who informed her that the black students had no statement to make at that time. Some time between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m., it became evident from the central switchboard that one or more phones in the library were off the hook. During this time, an attempt by administration to phone the library was unsuccessful.

At 2:50 p.m., Wells-Fargo Security was called by Mr. Al Krekeler, business manager of the college and administration's liaison with security services. Security suggested stationing two plainclothesmen, one in the Science Building and one in the Fine Arts Building, to watch entrance and exits of the library. An administrative decision was made to do this. The college requested that security men be unarmed at this time, and the weapons which they had brought on campus with them were locked in Mr. Krekeler's office. Administrative instructions to security men at this time were to refuse access to the library area to everyone.

At 3 p.m., Sister Roberta called Mr. Thomas Connelly, college attorney, for legal counsel. Mr. Connelly advised that security be stationed outside the library at all exits and entrance. At 3:20 p.m., Mr. Krekeler called the Clayton police and advised them of the situation at the college. At 3:40 p.m., Mrs. Woolley, dean of students, phoned the library through a pay phone. Miss Nicholson answered, but indicated that she was not interested in talking to anyone at that time, and that the

students, themselves, would make some contact when they were ready.

Additional Wells-Fargo security men arrived at approximately 4 p.m., and were stationed in positions around the library. At about 5 p.m., several blacks arrived saying that they wished to deliver food to the students in the library. This was not allowed by security. At approximately 5:30 p.m., the telephone company disconnected all library phones with the exception of extension 273. After this time, no further outside calls were made. Incoming calls to the library were not put through at the switchboard.

At about 8:30 p.m., mothers of students on campus for College Week-end left Fine Arts and boarded busses parked in the horseshoe drive. After the departure of the busses, the horseshoe entrance and exit on Wydown were blocked. The Associated Press had called Fontbonne for information several times. When Mrs. Catharine Dye, public information officer at the college, spoke with them at 9:30 p.m., she gave the information that the library was in the possession of eight black students, who had not yet presented a list of their grievances.

At 10 p.m., the college attorney, who was called for further counsel, recommended that telephone restrictions be maintained and that security be armed. This was done at 11 p.m. The number of security men at this time was estimated at ten. At 10:25 p.m., Mr. August Griesedieck, chairman of the board of trustees of the college, was reached by phone and informed of the situation on campus. Earlier attempts to reach

Mr. Griesedieck had been unsuccessful.

At 11:30 p.m., the three residence halls on campus were locked, and admittance was granted to Fontbonne students only. A guard was stationed in St. Joseph's Hall, another in Medaille Hall, and a third on Medaille roof, with an overview of Southwest Hall and the campus.

During the day, according to the black students in the library, they had occupied themselves preparing two meals, reading books on black culture, doing homework, and writing the Black Manifesto which was to be presented to the administration on Sunday morning. They also reported that the heat in the library went off in the evening.

At 12:10 p.m., Mr. Krekeler called the Clayton police and requested that officers be sent to the college for the purpose of dispersing a group of males gathering on the school premises. Five Clayton policemen arrived shortly thereafter, and observed, according to their report, a group of approximately twenty (20) young black men standing on the sidewalk on the north side of Wydown and Big Bend¹. At this time, several Wells-Fargo security and Washington University security were on the school grounds. Since the group in question was not on the school grounds and was not creating any disturbance, they were not

¹Estimates of the group gathered at this time are conflicting. The black students in the library reported the crowd to be one of 30 to 35 at the most. Other students returning from the Father-Daughter Banquet estimated groups no larger than 10 to 15. The Wells-Fargo supervisor gave the number as between 60 and 70. Mr. Krekeler estimated the group as one of 200 at the most.

approached by the Clayton police. Earlier in the evening, between 9 p.m. and 12 p.m., groups of black males had arrived in cars, but later left on request of security. The Clayton police remained on campus at this time, with instructions from Sister Roberta to make no arrests, but to request any groups that might come onto the school grounds to leave in a peaceful manner, as the school did not want any type of publicity.

By 1 a.m., the crowd outside the library had dispersed, and about only six black males could be seen on the sidewalk at Wydown Boulevard, according to Clayton police reports. Shortly thereafter, all Clayton units returned to service and an officer was detailed to stay in the vicinity to observe.

During this evening period, the black students in the library reported recognizing relatives and friends in the groups outside. Security reported that the students in the library were calling, flashing lights, and showing signs through the windows. The black students in the library stated that the signs held such messages as "Go away; we're okay."

At approximately 3:30 a.m., the Clayton police left the college premises.

On Sunday, October 25, 1970, at approximately 9 a.m., the students in the library attracted the attention of a Wells-Fargo guard and indicated that they wanted to talk with Mr. Krekeler, who was in the vicinity of the library. Mr. Krekeler approached the library and was informed that the

students:

- 1) wished to talk with administration at 11:30 a.m.
- 2) wanted free access to and from Ryan Hall
- 3) wished to talk with Miss Karen Floyd.

The message was taken to central administration.

At a 10:30 a.m. conference, the administration decided that the meeting with the black students should be held at 12 noon in order to avoid possible confusion in Ryan Hall, as guests left the chapel after the Parents' Week-end Mass. The following unsigned message was sent to the eight students in the library at about 11 a.m.:

A group of administrators will be ready to talk with Yolande Nicholson and Kathy Batiste in the Ryan Hall parlor at 12 noon.

You are to leave the library by the front door, enter Ryan by the front door and return to the library by the front door.

When you leave the library at noon, you will not be escorted by a security guard and will not be arrested. The same is true of when you leave Ryan after the meeting to return to the library.

Your request to confer with Karen Floyd cannot be granted.

About 9:30 a.m. that morning, Cookie Helbling and Kathy Wayne approached the area in front of the library, were stopped, and were asked to leave by a plainclothes security man. The students then went into Ryan Hall and saw Sister Roberta and Mrs. Woolley in the corridor. When they asked Mrs. Woolley about the presence of security and why the student leaders had not been consulted, they were informed by Mrs. Woolley that the administration would handle the situation and

would talk about it later. Mrs. Woolley then left for a meeting. Cookie Helbling then tried several times to phone Yolande Nicholson in the library through an outside line. Each time she either received a busy signal or the phone was not answered.

About 10:30 a.m., central administration, Sister Roberta Schmidt, Dr. Donald Ziemke, Mrs. Rosemary Woolley, and Sister Ruth Margaret Raupp, met and decided that the library should be in normal use by Monday morning. Security had advised administration that the library could easily be entered by using the proper equipment. The administration decided that if this action was necessary, it should not take place until after the Powder Puff football game. It was further decided that general amnesty would not be granted, and that some disciplinary action would be taken. Also, if Yolande Nicholson asked to attend play practice and return to the library, her request would be denied. Sister Ruth Margaret and Mrs. Woolley began calling the parents of the students involved.

About 11 a.m., Sister Marie Damien and Sister Jane de Chantal sent to Sister Cecile Therese week-end cards and sign-out slips of the seven resident students in the library with the suggestion that their parents be notified.

About the same time, Kathy Batiste and Yolande Nicholson, who had not adjusted their watches to standard time, left the library for Ryan Hall, and went to the president's office where they found the

administration in conference. The students were asked to return to the library and come back to Ryan at 12 noon. They returned then and met with Sister Roberta, Dr. Ziemke, Sister Ruth Margaret, and Mrs. Woolley. This meeting was held in the parlor. Mrs. Woolley stated that some kind of disciplinary hearing would be held. No reaction by the students to this remark was noted by administration. Mrs. Woolley also suggested that the students should leave the campus for a week as a cooling off period. The students were told that the hostility and tension engendered by the incident made this desirable. They did not accept this statement. The students, perplexed by the security forces on campus, were told that security was for their protection and for the protection of the campus in general.

Yolande Nicholson presented the Black Manifesto, which had a general statement, a series of specific demands, and a statement of general amnesty. (See Appendix B) She read the Manifesto aloud. None of it was discussed. During the meeting, Yolande Nicholson asked for a meeting of administration, faculty, and students to present their point of view. In the meantime, Sister Ruth Margaret made a Xerox copy of the Manifesto.

At no time during this meeting were conditions for leaving the library discussed. Near the conclusion of the meeting, Dr. Ziemke asked what the next step might be. The students stated that they would have to confer with the other six students in the library. Yolande Nicholson

and Kathy Batiste were told they could get in touch with administration through the desk phone in the library. They then left Ryan Hall.

During this meeting, the Student Senate Executive Board met. They were disturbed about their lack of information concerning events and the additional security. They placed the following statement on the student government bulletin board in Ryan Hall:

The executive board of the student government of Fontbonne College declares that student government disavows any relationship with the actions taken by the administration or any other group connected with the college related to the black student closure of the library until such time as student government is involved in the decision making process.

After the two students left the 12:00 meeting (approximately 12:45 p.m.), they went to the cafeteria for food and returned to the library. The students stated that they made no phone calls.

At this time, security informed the administration that two students had left the library, gone to the cafeteria, obtained food, and were presumed to have made phone calls. At this point, (approximately 1 to 1:30 p.m.), the administration was discussing the alternatives of suspension or dismissal as possible penalties to be given after the students were out of the library.

Mrs. Woolley left Ryan Hall to instruct the guards to report at once any students leaving the library, and was called to the doors of the library by the students inside. She responded to their questions about the use of security guards and in the conversation, indicated

to the students that they ought to occupy or leave the building, but not to do both. Mrs. Woolley then returned to Ryan Hall where the central administration was meeting in the president's office.

While this meeting was in progress, approximately 2 p.m., Mrs. Diane Biebel entered and told the group that Miss Helbling and Miss Wayne were very concerned about the students not being consulted in decisions made at this time. Sister Ruth Margaret, feeling the consensus of the group to be that the students should be sent for, indicated to Mrs. Biebel that she should call these two students to the president's office.

The students in the library went to the roof for fresh air. They decided that Miss Toni Smith should leave the library, call her brother, and ask him to come to get her. She was to go home for her class books, since she was the only one without them. Toni Smith went to the cafeteria to call her brother. The girls on the roof then conversed with two black girls seated on a bench in front of Ryan Hall.

Security officers informed the administration of Miss Smith's phone call, and it was decided at this time that the library should be opened at once. It was considered a possibility that outsiders might appear on campus as a result of the call. The administrative group moved to the horseshoe outside the library. Miss Smith says that at this point a security guard arrested her and conducted her to Sister Roberta.

As Sister Roberta Schmidt, Sister Ruth Margaret Raupp, Dr. Donald Ziemke, and Sister Cecile Therese Beresford came outside, the two black girls seated outside Ryan Hall left the campus and headed north behind the Science building.

Miss Smith was brought to Sister Roberta by two security officers and was informed of her suspension from classes. The girls on the roof, concerned about what might be happening to Miss Smith, shouted down to the administrative group. Miss Nicholson and Miss Batiste left the roof and ran out the front door of the library, followed by Miss Hunt. These students were also informed of their suspension. Miss Hunt attempted to re-enter the library, but was restrained by a security guard. The rest of the students in the library were attempting to hold the door closed, but security guards forced the door open a little, wedged it with a night stick, and cut the chain with a shears.

At this time, a group of black men and women (approximately 30 to 50, including the two black women previously mentioned conversing with the students on the roof), arrived from a regularly scheduled ABC meeting at Washington University. The security supervisor then called the Clayton police.

The occupants of the library were forced to leave the building. They were hysterical and upset. They requested permission to get their belongings from the library; this permission was denied. Miss Smith informed the administrators that her brother was coming to pick her up,

and was escorted to the place near the cafeteria where she was to meet him. Prior to his arrival, she was told by security that she would be arrested should she return to campus.

The other students in front of the library continued to protest at not being allowed to get their belongings. Sister Ruth Margaret returned with them to the library to pick these up.

Permission was then granted for them to get more personal items from Southwest Hall. The girls, with friends numbering about thirty, proceeded from the library to Medaille Hall to get their room keys.

Sister Roberta and Mrs. Woolley returned to Ryan. Sister Cecile Therese talked with Miss Helbling and Miss Wayne and then proceeded to Southwest Hall. Sister Roberta called Washington University security to inform them of the presence of some of their students at Fontbonne, and asked if they wished to come and help disperse the crowd.

Numbers of black students were arriving on campus, and campus security reported that 30 to 40 students were entering Medaille Hall. In view of this situation, Sister Roberta and Mr. Connelly, the college attorney, who recently arrived on the scene, responded to a police question about the matter of arrests that the school would only prosecute if no other course of action was available. The police now requested additional personnel to deal with the now-estimated 60 to 70 persons on the campus.

Meanwhile, back at Medaille, the group of black students, not locating their keys, proceeded to Southwest Hall, where they were met at the locked doors by Sister Cecile Therese. After some conversation, these students were permitted to enter with their friends. Since it was open house, the girls were accompanied by some of the men as they proceeded, with Sister Jane de Chantal, to their rooms.

The students gathered their belongings shortly thereafter, and returned to the foyer with their friends. The entire group of blacks which had gathered there departed together, heading north towards the Science building.

Mr. Lloyd Buchanan, and Mr. Nolan Jones from Washington University, responding to contacts by their security officers, had arrived on campus, and were directed to Sister Roberta. They observed the group of blacks moving north along the horseshoe towards Wydown. On also observing the presence of police, Mr. Jones met the group of black students whom he recognized and encouraged them to depart without incident. He then approached the police and informed them that the group was leaving and asked them not to follow behind. He obtained the cooperation of both groups.

After the black students left Southwest Hall, the residents who were present discussed the incident with Sister Cecile Therese. During this discussion, a "riot squad" with helmets, long night sticks, and gasmasks, and dressed in brown uniforms was observed walking west on the sidewalk

south of Medaille. Sister Cecile Therese went out to learn what they were doing there. They indicated that they were checking the campus after the dispersal of the group in front of the library.

Mr. Al Krekeler suggested to security that all campus buildings be checked. Sister Cecile Therese indicated to him that she and the residents of Southwest Hall saw no need for checking the residential areas. These were not checked.

By 5:15 p.m., all police had departed with the exception of two detectives and one officer.

An 11 p.m. meeting of all resident students was planned to give information concerning the week-end events. Security officers were stationed in Medaille Hall, on Medaille roof, in St. Joseph's Hall, and in front of the library on Sunday night, October 25, 1970.

S E C T I O N I I

COMMENTARY ON SOME REASONS FOR ACTIONS TAKEN ON OCTOBER
24-25, AND ON THE REVOCATION OF THE SUSPENSION ON OCTOBER 27

We have found two points, the first in particular, in the body of information presented to us which we find difficult to reconcile.

1. The administration gave as their reason for suggesting (at the 12 noon meeting with Yolande Nicholson and Kathy Batiste) that the eight black students leave campus for a week, pending a hearing, the fact that hostility towards them existed on campus. We failed to find any confirmation of this from any other source; for example, white students, faculty fellows, resident assistants.

2. From administration statements to us, it seems clear that the administration was genuinely fearful of the possibility of outside interference on the part of friends or allies of the black students. We have been unable to substantiate this from other sources; namely, the black students themselves, Mr. Lloyd Buchanan, Washington University administrator, Mr. Nolan Jones, Washington University graduate student and ABC official. We take note, however, that such a possibility certainly presented itself to the administration because of a statement to that effect made by Yolande Nicholson to Sister Alberta Anne, when the former

asked the latter to hand over the keys of the library on Saturday morning. In addition, the administration states that they were alarmed by security reports of the presence of groups of non-Fontbonne blacks on campus.

Sister Roberta Schmidt gave the following reasons for lifting the suspension without a hearing:

1. Absence of due process at time of action
2. Absence of precedent
3. Impossibility of communicating with black students if they are not on campus
4. Expressed wish of some faculty and students
5. Advice of legal counsel

S E C T I O N I I I

EVENTS RELATED TO THE PROBLEMS PRIOR TO OCTOBER 24-25, 1970

The black students felt that many situations contributed to their tension and frustration on campus previous to the week-end of October 24 and 25, 1970. They mentioned the following:

1. Rejection of an application of a qualified Black Studies teacher
2. Discriminatory admissions policies
3. Rescinded promise of a room for a meeting place
4. Conflict over film and speaker dates
5. Conflict over an October 2 mixer date
6. Tension in Southwest Hall
7. Harassment of boy friends by campus security
8. Vacillation of permission to use the Lewis Room for Hallowe'en films

We have received some facts to substantiate many of these claims from sources other than the black students themselves.

APPENDIX A

LISTING OF PERSONS WHO PROVIDED INFORMATION
TO THE COMMITTEE

THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF PERSONS WHO SUPPLIED INFORMATION
TO THE COMMITTEE EITHER VERBALLY OR THROUGH WRITTEN STATEMENTS:

Sister Marie Damien Adams	Miss Mary Jane Luetkemeyer
Miss Kathy Batiste	Miss Maggie McDowell
Sister Cecile Therese Beresford	Miss Yolande Nicholson
Mrs. Geraldine Birkel	Miss Gwendolyn Perry
Mrs. Diane Biebel	Dr. Relford Patterson
Miss Polly Bozdech	Sister Ruth Margaret Raupp
Miss Marilee Brethorst	Miss Nancy Rosenthal
Miss Beth Brumleve	Miss Jean Marie Rozier
Mr. Lloyd Buchanan	Sister Alberta Anne Ruys
Miss Kathy Bunn	Sister Roberta Schmidt
Clayton Police Department	Miss Antoinette Smith
Miss Kathleen DeMarco	Sister Jane de Chantal Snyder
Miss Donna Marie Dlugos	Miss Marge Sobczak
Mrs. Catharine Dye	Miss Linda Stewart
Miss Yolanda Evans	Mr. Don Sutton
Miss Terry Galvin	Sister Margaret Eugene Tucker
Miss Mary Ellen Haley	Miss Sharon Walker
Miss Cookie Helbling	Miss Kathy Wayne
Miss Jeannine Holtmeier	Wells-Fargo Security
Miss Rita Hunt	Sister Anne Berenice Whalen
Mr. Nolan Jones	Miss Kathy Williamson
Miss Mary Beth Keefe	Mrs. Rosemary Woolley
Miss Anne Kohlberg	Miss Rita Yadamec
Mr. Al Krekeler	Miss Pam Young
Miss Coelette Lemelle	Dr. Donald Ziemke

APPENDIX B

OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

(copy)

(Sunday, Oct. 24 - a.m.)

A group of administrators will be ready to talk with Yolande Nicholson and Kathy Batist in the Ryan Hall parlor at 12 noon.

You are to leave the Library by the front door, enter Ryan by the front door and return to the Library by the front door.

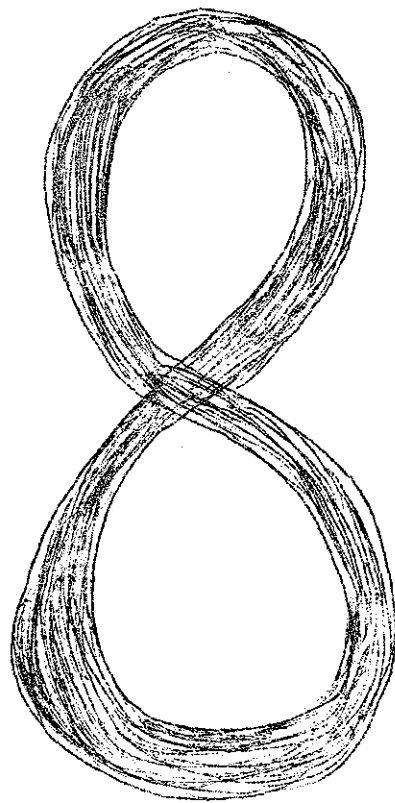
When you leave the Library at noon you will not be escorted by a security guard and will not be arrested. The same is true of when you leave Ryan after the meeting to return to the Library.

Your request to confer with Karen Floyd cannot be granted.

(copy)

REINSTATE

FONTBONNE



SUPPORT SOUL SISTERS

(copy)

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE LIBRARY INCIDENT

1. Black students seized the library as a reaction to the racist attitude of the Fontbonne Administration. For example:
 - Black male visitors are constantly harrassed and insulted upon entering and leaving the campus by security police (guards).
 - College Administration has broken promises to Black Students.
2. The Library was held from 9 a.m. Saturday, October 24, 1970 until 2:45 p.m. Sunday, October 25, 1970.
3. During this time a Black Manifesto was written and presented to the College Administration to publicize the feelings and concerns of Black students about the presence of Racism in the "Great Christian Community." The Manifesto was ignored.
4. Some of the girls were forcibly and physically removed from the library by security guards and campus police.
5. Eight students were suspended and told to leave the campus immediately without due process and without an opportunity to obtain their personal belongings (with no concern in regard to food and housing).
6. No property was damaged, there was no violent resistance on the part of the students, and there was a "good Christian attitude" among the students.....
.....THE RIOT SQUAD WAS CALLED OUT!!

Are you going to allow racism and oppression to continue to exist on our campus? Organize discussion groups among your peers and discuss the TRUTH about the Library Incident. Remember, be you Black, White, Puerto Rican, Oriental or whatever.....
.....IF YOUR ARE NOT PART OF THE SOLUTION.....
YOU ARE PART OF THE PROBLEM!!!!

THE EIGHT STUDENTS WERE: Cathy Batiste, Rita Hunt, Yolanda Nicholson, Antoinette Smith, Gwendolyn Perry, Collette Lemelle, Jeanette Gauda, and Sharon Walker.

(copy)

October 26, 1970

Sister Roberta Schmidt, President
Fontbonne College
6800 Wydown
St. Louis, Mo. 63105

Dear Sister Schmidt:

You will find enclosed our position on the proposed "hearing".
You may consider it as firm.

Yours in "The Struggle"

(signed)

Cathy Batiste

Jeanette Gauda

Rita Hunt

Coelette Lemele

Yolande Nicholson

Gwendolyn Perry

Antoinette Smith

Sharon Walker

Enclosure

(copy)

"HEARING?"

We maintain that we, the suspended eight, have committed no crime, nor have we violated any college policies and regulations. Thus, a hearing is uncalled for, and unnecessary.

Further, and more importantly, we affirm that the administration is the actual offender in this matter and the party guilty of misconduct. Fontbonne College has demonstrated and perpetuated bad faith, unchristian behavior, unprofessional tactics, academic double standards, biased attitudes, student and racial disharmony, non-academic employee exploitation, poor black community relationships, and other offenses and practices unbecoming of a "Christian", academic institution.

So if any "hearing" is in order, then Fontbonne College should be the defendant and black people will be the prosecutors; let the final judgement be a divine one.

We also believe that we have performed an immense service to the college by taking upon ourselves the task of pointing out and attempting to rectify the inhumane, racist and oppressive conditions that we must live and study under.

For our efforts we were undemocratically dismissed--an arbitrarily, hastily-made decision, with no precedent; due process was not considered. Throughout the whole affair, the administration showed itself confused unorganized, and incompetent to handle the situation.

Therefore the suspended black students refuse to take part in a "hearing" defined by the college administration.

(copy)

BLACK MANIFESTO

We, the Black students of Fontbonne College, would like to state our purpose for the Black dramatization that took place on Saturday, October 24, 1970; weekend of Fontbonne's annual homecoming.

First of all, it is no secret that black men and women are oppressed in this country. Secondly, we are black first and are American when we can afford to be. Thirdly, the fact that we once accepted your definition of our roles as Blacks nauseates us.

The Black student is being educated in this country as if he were being programmed in white supremacy and self-hatred. Aside from the usual problems that Blacks encounter in white America, the Black student is being educated in a racial information vacuum.

The educational system of this country is designed to meet the needs of the society; a society which has never been willing to meet the needs of Black people. The orientation of the educational system is directed toward assimilation of the college graduate into society, the assumption being that an educated man with the proper background and credentials can take his place in the system and contribute to its betterment as well as his own. This assumption is for the most part correct, unless the man is Black.

Black men or women must satisfy all academic requirements, and yet contend with the problem of his color. Why then should we not deal openly with our oppression as a unified group within our own educational structures?

As young Black women, students, and part of the next generation to control society, we feel that we must voice our opinions and stand up for what we so strongly believe. If we do not express our beliefs, we are not being true to ourselves, nor are we fulfilling ourselves as meaningful individuals.

(copy)

BLACK DEMANDS

THE FOLLOWING DEMANDS ARE TO BE MET!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

*1. Black Enrollment:

- (a) Recruiting--Black students from Fontbonne College are to recruit other Blacks for the campus. The Black students that recruit will be allowed to draw up their own methods and program for recruiting. And will be allowed to recruit in and out of state of Missouri, which will be financed from the Admissions Office budget.
- b) Orientation--Black students will be allotted a substantial amount of funds from the orientation program, in order that they too, will prepare and orientate all new Black students of Fontbonne.
- c) Academic Standing--Black students applying to Fontbonne will be given fair consideration for acceptance. This is necessary because in all reality the tests given (A.C.T. and S.A.T.) are not substantial enough evidence in considering their academic abilities; they are white oriented.

*2. Black Counselor--Fontbonne College is to hire a full time Black counselor who will aid Black students with common student complications. The counselor will be interviewed and chosen by the Black students.

3. Fontbonne College is to hire more Black faculty members that will function in various departments. We intend to give the college a considerable amount of time to carry out this demand.

4. Black Administration--Fontbonne college is to hire lay Blacks who will function in the administration such as business office, financial aid, board of trustees, etc.

5. Black Courses--Black students will assist administration and faculty in various departments in the assimilation of relevant black courses, until an adequate black program can be drawn up.

*6. Black Employees--Wages will be increased to (\$2.00) two dollars per hour.

7. Black Artists Series Fund--Money will be set aside under the name Black Artists Series Fund so that black awareness will be promoted here at Fontbonne. This money will be used to bring reputable black authorities on campus to demonstrate their specialities.

8. Other Black Educational Experiences--Black students will be allowed to participate in various inner and outer state activities such as tours, conventions, sensitivity seminars, etc. so that our educational experiences can be expanded; because we feel that at the present time Fontbonne is not able to supply this need.

(copy)

- *9. Library--specified area in the library will be given to the Black students so that they may establish a Black section.
- *10. Black accomodations--Black students will be given a place of assembly, which will be chosen at their own discretion, to be used as an A.B.C. office.

* Any demand with an asterisk is immediate.

GENERAL AMNESTY

We the black students demand that "general amnesty" be granted to all physically and mentally involved in our black dramation, October 24, 1970. No students are to loose any priviledges or be penalized in any way for this act. The dramatization is not to affect any students academic record, nor will it be filed under student personal. Because no property was damaged, nor was anyone assulted physically or through slander no penalization is in order. The black material confiscated from the library is not to be held against the black students, for the material will be returned in the same condition as it was when removed. And any charges that may have been considered by Fontbonne with policemen or any court order will be dropped immediately (at the time of compromise). We will not be held responsible for reactions from other students whether here at Fontbonne or else where. No dorm students will be penalized.

(copy)

STATEMENT PUBLISHED BY THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT EXECUTIVE BOARD ON OCTOBER 25, 1970.
(copy)

STATEMENT

The executive board of the student government of Fontbonne College declares that student government disavows any relationship with the actions taken by the administration or any other group connected with the college related to the Black students' closure of the library until such time as student government is involved in the decision-making process.

(signed)

Cookie Helbling
Student Body President

October 26, 1970

We the undersigned faculty and staff of Fontbonne College want the suspension lifted from the eight students who occupied the library building on October 23, 24, and 25. We want to meet with them before the hearing. (32 sig.)

(signed by the following)

Sister M. Wilma Broughton (if no legal Damien J. Westrich
hang up)

Angelo H. Puricelli Rudolph E. Torrini

Sr. Frances Kane Ken Stout

Sister Cecile Therese Beresford H. Knickmeyer

Don Sutton Rev. Eugene Contadino, Sm

Sr. Mary Gaydos Jean Marx

Don Garner Jack D. Ferguson

Sr. Mary Charity Sister Mary Carol Anth

Francis Kinkel Sister Rita Marie Schmitz

Mary S. Bush Sr. Mona Marie Buergher

Sister Margaret Camper (handled politically) Sr. Anne Berenice Whalen

Sister Anne Brotherton John Gaither

Sister Mary Petropoulos Sister Geraldine

Sister Agnes Sheehan Sister Jessie

Mary C. Moriarty Sister Sara Rowland

Sr. M. Hugh

(copy)

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES (5)

Mon. Oct. 26, 1970 St. Louis Globe-Democrat

FONTBONNE SUSPENDS 8 NEGRO STUDENTS OVER LIBRARY SIT-IN

Eight Negro students, all freshmen or sophomores, who held a sit-in and chained doors in the Fontbonne College (Photo Page 16A) library beginning at 9:30 a.m. Saturday, were suspended by schools officials Sunday.

The students left the library at 2 p.m. Sunday following announcement of the suspensions. They will receive formal hearings.

THE SIT-IN was held apparently to dramatize the "plight of American blacks and especially the black student," a school official said.

The students, carrying food, entered the library at 9:30 a.m. Saturday and chained the doors.

Sister Roberta Schmidt of the Sisters of St. Joseph and president of the women's college, said she and three deans of the college met with two of the eight students for 45 minutes starting at noon Sunday. The suspensions were announced shortly thereafter.

Sister Roberta said there were no specific complaints or grievances toward the college itself.

ABOUT MIDNIGHT Saturday several hundred persons, most of them of student age, gathered on Wydown boulevard in front of the library near Big Bend boulevard. Clayton police dispersed the crowd without incident.

A group of 40 persons gathered at the school about noon Sunday and was dispersed.

Sister Roberta said the girls were suspended from classes and from living in residence at the college. At least six had lived in dormitories there.

She said a hearing for the students would probably be held this week.

Fontbonne College has a total enrollment of 800, of these, 35 are Negro.

(copy)

Monday, October 26, 1970

St. Louis Post-Dispatch

8 ASSAIL FONTBONNE SUSPENSIONS

Eight black students suspended from Fontbonne College after a sit-in at the college library said today that Fontbonne has "desperately tried to conceal overt acts of racism and injustice to blacks."

"The young women held a press conference in Dormitory K at Washington University after a meeting last night with college officials led to their suspension.

Miss Yolanda Nicholson, spokesman for the eight, said that they had been "forcibly and physically" removed from the library by security guards after they occupied the building Saturday morning and remained there overnight.

Two of the students met with Sister Roberta Schmidt, president, yesterday and presented a list of demands: an increase in the number of black students; more black faculty and administration members; a black academic program; improvement in the working conditions and wages of black employees at the college; more black cultural events on campus; facilities for black students and an end to what they termed "harassment" of black males who came to the campus to pick up their dates.

The students said today that their demands were ignored. "The administration and faculty is sympathetic," Mrs. Katherine Dye, public relations representative for Fontbonne, said, "but the requests represent things that the college is trying to do anyway."

Miss Nicholson said that Sister Roberta asked the eight to leave the college for a week and offered to pay the plane fare home of two women who live in Louisiana. When the students refused, Miss Nicholson said, they were suspended indefinitely.

The young women are: St. Louisans Miss Rita Hunt; Miss Nicholson; Miss Antoinette Smith; Miss Gwendolyn Perry; Miss Jeanette Gauda and Miss Sharon Walker, and the two girls from Louisiana, Miss Cathy Batiste and Miss Collette Lemelle.

#####

Tuesday, October 27, 1970

St. Louis Globe Democrat

Eight Negro students at Fontbonne College who were suspended from the school following a sit-in during the weekend took exception to a statement issued by the school that they had no specific complaints against the college.

At a press conference held in a dormitory at nearby Washington University the students listed a seven-point program they say would make the school more responsive to the needs of black students.

They asked for an end to what they called psychological and physical harassment of black people on campus, for facilities for the use of black

(copy)

Tues., Oct. 27, 1970 St. Louis Globe Democrat (continued)

students, and for an increase in the number of black students, black faculty and black studies.

A spokesman for the women's college at 6800 Wydown Bl., Clayton, said the requests of the students were already being tried at the college.

Miss Yolande Nicholson, a junior at the college, who is spokesman for the suspended students, said the school is insensitive and unresponsive to the needs and concerns of black people.

She said that following their suspension and being barred from the campus Sunday, they have been barred from obtaining their personal effects from the school.

This was denied by Sister Cecile Therese Beresford, director of residence, who said the six students residing on campus were permitted to pick up their personal possessions.

#####

(copy)

Wed., October 28, 1970

St. Louis Post Dispatch

FONTBONNE REINSTATES 8 SUSPENDED STUDENTS

Eight Fontbonne College students, suspended Sunday following a sit-in in the college library, have been reinstated pending a full investigation of the incident.

Sister Roberta Schmidt of the Sisters of St. Joseph, said shortly before midnight Tuesday that the suspensions had been lifted so that the students would not lose any more class time while a full investigation was being conducted.

The students began the sit-in Saturday morning to protest what they described as the psychological and physical harassment of black people on campus. The students left about 2 p.m. Sunday afternoon after they had been notified of their suspensions.

In announcing the reinstatements Sister Roberta added, "I wish to make it clear that the college cannot condone any conduct on the part of students which is disruptive of campus activities."

She said a committee composed of three students, three faculty members, and three administrators will submit a report on the incident by Friday.

#####

Wed., Oct. 28, 1970

St. Louis Post Dispatch

8 FONTBONNE BLACK STUDENTS ARE REINSTATED

Eight black students at Fontbonne College who were suspended Sunday were reinstated yesterday pending a full investigation and review of the incident in which they were involved. Sister Roberta Schmidt, college president, lifted the suspensions.

The suspensions were ordered after a sit-in Saturday at the college library. Sister Roberta said the young women were reinstated so they would not miss classes while the matter was under investigation.

She said also, "At the same time, I want to make it clear that the college cannot condone the conduct of these students and that the college will not tolerate any repetition of this action or other conduct by these or other students which is disruptive of campus activity."

A committee of three students, three faculty members and three administrators is to set up procedures for reviewing the incident and report to Sister Roberta by Friday. The review then is to be made and submitted to Sister Roberta by Nov. 6.

#####

(copy)

(Monday afternoon)

Washington University's Association of Black Collegians

PRESS RELEASE October 26, 1970

We, the Association of Black Collegians at Washington University give full support to the eight black students who were suspended from Fontbonne College, Sunday, October 25, in their efforts to publicize the presence of racism existing within the Fontbonne Administration. Furthermore, we deplore the inhumane and unjust actions taken by the President Sister Roberta Schmidt and other members of the Fontbonne Administration. We feel that the accusations made by the President of Fontbonne College are grossly fallacious and immensely inaccurate. Moreover, the flagrant actions vis-a-vis suspension, manhandling of black women, and the blatant ingnoring of the Black Manifesto, taken by the Administration with the assistance of local authorities are prime examples of the aforementioned bigotry. Consequently, we urge the Administration of Fontbonne to consider and immediately implement the Black students' demands.

Washington University A.B.C.

(5-5:30 Monday evening)

October 26, 1970

The College Council and the Student Senate Executive Board met in joint session from 2:30 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. After the discussion, the two groups released the following statement:

The College Council and the Student Senate Executive Board, jointly meeting, recommend that some form of meetings, involving the entire campus community, be held to discuss racial attitudes and policies.

(copy)

(Tuesday
midnight)

October 27, 1970

To the Fontbonne eight: Yolande Nicholson, Coelette Lemelle,
Bwendolyn Perry, Kathy Batiste, Jeanette Gauda, Antonette Smith,
Sharon Walker, Rita Hunt

Monday, October 26, the following petition was circulated throughout the student body after the information session which was called by the administration. The names were collected during a two hour period by a group of approximately 30 students.

We, the students of Fontbonne College, want the eight suspended students reinstated immediately, that is, by Wednesday at the latest but preferably by Tuesday. We want to talk to them before their hearings take place. The students will take responsibility for choosing the student representatives who will sit on the hearing committee.

(Signed) 328(signatures)

(Tuesday - Wed. a.m.)

October 27, 1970

87

STATEMENT OF THE STUDENT BODY

We, the Student Body of Fontbonne College, accepting our status as vital members of the academic community do hereby expect that as of now we, the Student Body, through our representatives shall be informed of, present during, and included in decisions made concerning students on this campus at the request of the student or students involved.

(copy)

Tuesday, Nov. 27

We, the undersigned, do not believe that the eight students who were suspended should be reinstated before the hearing. We feel that as fellow students the punishment was just. Disregarding the racial issue and taking an objective view, we feel that in the same situation we would have received the same treatment for breaking administrative policies. We stand by the administration.

(signed)

Peggy Hicks

Sue Combest

Lyn Ridings

Elna Randazzo

Erin Kuehn

Donna Switzer

Karen Klutho

Cathy Gallas

Pat Glosemeyer

Mary Doyle

Vickie Simonetti

Jean Behan

Pat Cutchens

Rosemary Lucas

Mrs. Linda Eccleston

Joan DuBuque

Mary Hutchison

(copy)

(handwritten)

We, the undersigned, do not believe that the eight students who were suspended should be reinstated before the hearing. We feel that as fellow students the punishment was just. Disregarding the racial issue and taking an objective view, we feel that in the same situation we would have received the same treatment for breaking administration policies. We stand by the administration.

(signed)

Carol Giovando

Ginny Lawlor

Pat Krueger

Joan Simms

Sue Lyster

Lyn McCarty

Mary Ann Whelan

Mary Rita Meyer

Jackie Hermann

Joyce Riggs

JoAnn Giovando

Vicki Kuppinger

Sue Cambron

Helen Poltz

Barbara Panos

Deb Menetre

(Estimate 60 signatures)

Jan Stocker

Kathy De Marco

Joan Weber

Marti McNulty

Mary Paino

Pat Mintert

Glenda Moore

Barb Kreutz

Carolyne Wright

(copy)

October 27, 1970

Mrs. Rose Woolley
Dean of Students
Fontbonne College
Clayton, Missouri 63108

Dear Mrs. Woolley:

Your letter was received, but your letter was not addressed to all the Black Students involved, only to one. Nor did it contain the information requested about all decisions that have been made.

Yours in the struggle,

(signed)
Yolande Nicholson

(signed)
Kathy Batiste

(signed)
Coelette Lemelle

(signed)
Gwendolyn Perry

(signed)
Sharon Walker

(signed)
Jeannette Gauda

(signed)
Rita Hunt

(signed)
Antoinette Smith

(copy)

from the President's desk

Vol. V, No. 4
October 27, 1970
11:00 p.m.

This evening the following statement was sent to Yolande Nicholson in a letter signed by Rosemary Woolley, Dean of Students. The statement was also released to the press.

As president of Fontbonne College I have acted today to lift the suspension in effect since Sunday of eight black students who occupied the library building of the College over the week end. I am taking this action so that these students may not lose further classroom time pending a full investigation and review of the circumstances surrounding this incident.

At the same time, I want to make it clear that the College cannot condone the conduct of these students and that the College will not tolerate any repetition of this action or other conduct by these or other students which is disruptive of campus activity.

Sister Roberta Schmidt
President
Fontbonne College

This decision was made by the administrative staff in the presence of legal counsel.

There will be a meeting of the academic community, i.e. faculty, staff and students, at 9:30 a.m., Wednesday, October 28, 1970. The meeting will be held in the Gym in order to accommodate as many as possible.

(copy)

October 28, 1970

To the eight black students

Yolande Nicholson

Kathy Batiste

Coelette Lemelle

Gwendolyn Perry

Sharon Walker

Sharon Walker

Jeanette Gauda

Rita Hunt

Antoinette Smith

In response to your letter of October 27, 1970, we are prepared to do the following:

- a) the suspension is lifted effective immediately;
- b) hence, there is no need for a hearing;
- c) I am willing to negotiate ways and means of responding to your concerns.

Sincerely,

Rosemary Woolley
Dean of Students

(copy)

October 28, 1970

Mrs. Rosemary Woolley
Fontbonne College
Clayton, Missouri 63105

Dear Rosemary:

In response to your letter of October 28, 1970, upon the completion of your preparation to negotiate with us. We, the concerned Black students, submit our list of demands. After you have sincerely read the demands, we would like a replying letter supplying information of your position on each demand. Upon receiving your replying letter, we will inform you of further information of a negotiating time and date.

Yours in the struggle,

(signed)
Concerned Black Students

(copy)

October 30, 1970

To Miss Yolande Nicholson, Kathy Batiste,
Coelette Lemelle, Gwendolyn Perry,
Sharon Walker, Jeannette Gauda,
Rita Hunt, and Antoinette Smith,

The Fact-finding Committee on Events on the Fontbonne College Campus on October 24-27, an independent committee representing the three divisions of the college community--students, faculty, and administration, invites you, the eight black students most directly involved, to tell us your mind on the events of the weekend.

Our objective is to determine the facts leading to and coming from the events of October 24-27. We would like to emphasize that the committee is simply a fact-finding group. It has no evaluative or judgmental role in any respect. Our hope is that your contribution will help to clear the air, produce the beginnings of real understanding, and serve as a basis for positive future black-white relations on this campus.

If it is convenient, we would like to begin our fact-finding with you sometime Saturday afternoon. If this is not possible, please indicate a time which is convenient for you.

Signed,