

Afro-Am. Studies



University of Idaho

Minority Student Programs
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Office of the Coordinator

May 14, 1976

Editor
The Daily Idahonian
409 So. Jackson
Moscow, Idaho 83843

Dear Sir:

While many of the statements attributed to me in the Idahonian article of May 10, 1976 are accurate, it is indeed unfortunate to discover that I was quoted in a narrow context in one instance and misquoted altogether in another.

This is especially regrettable because prior to the publishing of this article I expressed to Mr. Steve Rhinehart, the reporter responsible for these errors, the importance of conveying exactly what I said, no more and no less. The futility of my effort is obvious. In order to correct the errors appearing in the article, I feel compelled to make the following statements.

My concern about the University's commitment to minorities applies not just to the administration but to all agencies of the university. The responsibility for creating a setting which will be conducive for the education of minorities rests on the shoulders of all the offices and individuals which serve to make up the University of Idaho. The problem is that too few have been supportive of this venture so far. It was in this framework that my comments on commitment were expressed.

The writer of this article erred in crediting to me the comment "we have black history served on a white platter by white waiters." I did not make nor do I wish to be credited with having made such a statement. What I did say is that the University could better display its sincerity toward minorities by hiring more minorities, including women, in meaningful positions. My views regarding who should teach ethnically oriented courses are currently reserved for conveyance only in the appropriate professional setting, not in the newspaper.

I think that this quote may have come from the reporter himself in an attempt to capture the essence of what I was saying or from one of the several students interviewed by the writer of this article. I say this because many minority students have conveyed to me their desire to see more minorities hired at all levels of the University. They have also expressed concern regarding the teaching of ethnically oriented courses by non-minorities and deplore the failure of many instructors to include significant contributions made by members of minority groups in the particular subject areas which they teach. Minority students journeying through the educational system in this country have grown weary of seeing teachers continually fail to give due

credit to Americans designated as minorities who have contributed to the development of this country.

While I share their concerns in these matters and concede their right to be critical of such situations, I would not ever refer to colleagues in such an unprofessional manner. I hope Doctors Barnes and Rolland, instructors in the black history course at Idaho, understand that this is not an apology but an explanation. I also hope that this unfortunate statement has not caused them any professional or personal embarrassment.

If all members of the University community contributed as much of their time and effort as President Hartung, Vice-President Coonrod, Dr. Rolland, Mr. Harry Davey, Ms. Corlann Bush, and a few others have given to establishing a climate conducive to successful minority matriculation, it would not be necessary for me to question the University's commitment at all.

Sincerely,

Charles A. Ramsey, II
Coordinator, Minority Student
Programs

CAR:mws

cc: Dr. Hartung
Dr. Coonrod
Dr. Richardson
Richard Shermerhorn
Bruce Bray
William Greever
Santiago Estrada
Dean Elmer Raunio
Dr. Rolland
Dr. Barnes
Mr. Davey
Ms. Bush