

May 14, 1972

STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT CLIFTON R. WHARTON, JR.

The Michigan State University administration has sought in every way possible during the past week to be responsive to genuine concerns raised by members of the university community. We believe we have made good-faith progress to meet these concerns, and this will continue to be our posture.

Steps in which the university has been engaged include:

1. Meetings with the mayor, city council members of East Lansing and representatives of the anti-war protesters to discuss the areas of concern and possible responses.
2. The establishment on Friday of a series of "teach-ins" for students and faculty to explore and discuss the various issues related to the war.
3. Providing two hours of broadcast time over the university's television station, WMSB, on Sunday afternoon for a special program dealing with the war.
4. Drafting a proposal, subject to Board of Trustees approval, to create an ad hoc fact-finding committee to review current university policies in a number of areas and to make recommendations for possible change. Topics include research and defense contract policies, overseas programs, status of ROTC, purchases from contractors and investments policy.

All of these steps were taken in response to direct requests from, and discussion with, representatives of the anti-war groups. We believe that the progress thus far demonstrates our willingness to listen and to act.

At the same time, however, it must be understood that there are other "demands" or requests that the university is not in a position to meet, such as closing the university.

Another such demand was that the Trustees adopt an "institutional" position against the war, rather than expressing their collective, but individual, positions as they did in two resolutions adopted at their April meeting.

I agreed to contact the Trustees to determine their views on this issue.

The Trustees have concluded that they cannot endorse such an institutional position. However, the majority of them reaffirmed their personal support of the two resolutions adopted on April 22, 1972, which stated in part:

"As individual citizens speaking together, we urge our national government to bring military involvement in this conflict to a speedy end, without further expansion. We urge our students to use, to the fullest, the new right of the ballot which is the most effective weapon we have."

Further, I plan this week to submit to the Trustees for their consideration a proposal to establish the special committee to review university policies.

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