

FROM TAPE, BRADEN STATEMENT TO STUDENTS, AMPHITHEATER, 7:30 3/4/70

Many of you have had an opportunity today to express your feelings and I appreciate the opportunity to come before you tonight to express some of my feelings of this day. Everyone of us tonight has an important stake in what can happen at ISU in the next few hours, the next few days, months and years.

First and foremost we have a stake in our feeling about one another. We have a stake in our ability to react to one another as human beings. We can destroy the ability to do that, to have a good feeling about one another, or we can strengthen it. We have a great stake in how we live together in this community, live together without hate and without fear. We can't let go down the drain all that we have at stake at this University and all that it can mean to our future, to your future, and to mine. We have a chance to make something of ourselves here at ISU, we have a chance to succeed. We've got to use that chance.

My personal stake is my honesty, my integrity, my ability to do something for this University. I am committed to try to make this University one that makes it possible for something good to happen to every student here.

Now, Malcolm X is the issue of this day. Why did I take the stand that I took on Malcolm X. I studied the literature. I read the autobiography, I read the commentaries, I read the speeches. I studied this literature as best I could study the literature. I came to conclusions about it, conclusions that are different from those (conclusions) that other people have come to. My conclusions were that the message of Malcolm X is that the white man is the black man's enemy, that the white man is to be opposed by the black man by every means possible. I studied the story of the conversion. I read the commentaries on this conversion. I was particularly impressed by what black commentators said about the conversion of Malcolm X. I was not convinced and I

am not convinced now that that conversion was a real conversion and I am convinced as many of the commentators were convinced, that to the end of his days Malcolm X's message was unchanged. Because I am convinced of that, I can not, in honesty, recommend that that be placed before the students of ISU as a message for us all.

Why then did I make a recommendation at all to the Regents? Why didn't I just hand it to the Regents without my recommendation? First, and foremost, I had to be honest with myself. Secondly, I felt that the problem of our having to live together is one that we've got to solve ourselves inside the University. If I hand this to the Regents and ask the Regents to solve this problem, right off I have put it outside the University. As a matter of fact, the name Malcolm X is an outside issue. The name Malcolm X makes it impossible for us to keep this issue inside the University. To be effective as President I must be honest with myself and I must command your respect, and in addition to your respect, I've got to command the respect of people outside this University. It would be cowardly of me to give it to somebody else without my taking a stand on it myself.

Now, let's look at some of the things we've got going for us here at ISU, some of the things that you and I have a stake in. In the first place, we have received national recognition for the student input into the Constitution under which we are soon to be operating. In the second place, we have an HPS program that calls for considerable extra support from the state of Illinois, and we dare not lose this extra support. Third, we have a faculty of outstanding strength and a chance to add to it with both blacks and whites. We've got to keep that chance. Fourth, we have state support for an enrollment growth that will bring more white and more black students to this campus. We've got to maintain our ability to have this enrollment growth.



Now, some say that I pulled the rug out from under those people that tried to follow the channels in this whole discussion. Not so. In the first place, I've done this only once in two and a half years. In the second place, I did only what the channels require me to do. I made a recommendation along with my transmittal of the recommendation of the University community, and this I am required to do. Some say that I asked that the channels be followed and then I backed off. Not so. I asked that a study be made of the message and how the message of Malcolm X fit the building. Now, you ask yourself the question. Is an autobiography a reliable evidence of a man's message? What do the commentators say about a man's message? What are the commentators' relationship to a man they are commenting on? How do you find out what a man's message is? How many people do you listen to? I don't think that this was done sufficiently. Most of the jive sessions that I have heard about were mainly emotional. Now you may say that's the way things are today. We feel, we don't think. I say, the hell with that noise. We have come to this University to learn to think, not just to learn to feel. Anyone who plays it otherwise is going to miss what this University has for him. If you can't think you can't make it in this world.

So I say, that the issue of Malcolm X is not the real issue we have before us. The issue is how we get along with one another and how we get on with our education. The University does respond. The faculty is more responsive than most faculties. The students, the leaders who worked hard today have been responsive. There were a lot of cool heads today as well as a lot of hot heads. Even the administration is open, and many of you here tonight know that you have been in my office, you have been in the office of administrators all over this campus, and we're going to keep it that way. We can't and we won't put up with things that tear us apart and don't help us solve our problems, which are the problems of getting along with one another.

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Many of you have ideas on how to improve ISU, and you can get them in to us in a number of ways. Tell them to your nearest faculty member for one. They will be listened to and they will be reacted to. I've tried to be honest with you tonight and I will continue to do so.