

Mississippi Coalition on Black Higher Education
334 Forest Avenue
Jackson, MS 39206
August 24, 2001

Governor Ronnie Musgrove
Office of the Governor
State Capitol Building
Jackson, MS 39201

Dear Governor Musgrove:

We wish to thank you for meeting with the Coalition to share ideas relative to the Ayers case. We are pleased with how receptive your office was with our ideas and comments regarding the proposed settlement agreement. We are also pleased with how the meeting ended on a positive note, namely, your request for the submission of a list of our recommended solutions to a fair and just resolution to the Ayers case.

As per your request, we submit the following for your consideration and with a request that you use your influence and good offices to persuade Judge Neal Biggers and the College Board to accept and approve them as the basis for the settlement, before the fairness hearing on September 4, 2001.

1. The settlement agreement does not deal with admissions.
Solution: Students should be able to gain automatic admission based upon either an ACT score of 13 or above, an overall grade point average of 2.5 or above, or class rank in the upper 50% of their class.

2. The proposed settlement agreement does not compensate for the past treatment of African Americans and the institutions which they were expected and required to attend.
Solution:

A. Mission – Alcorn State University needs to be given the authority and funding to enable it to become a full-fledged land grant university on the order of Mississippi State University, Florida A and M University, Southern University, and North Carolina A and T University, with a school of engineering and other programs such as civil engineering, electro-mechanical engineering, manufacturing and robotic engineering, and other programs that would enhance its land grant function.

Jackson State University needs to be given the authority and funding to enable it to become a full-fledged urban university on the order of Howard University, University of Southern Mississippi, University of Memphis, and University of Louisville, with programs in law, criminal justice, urban planning, communication, and others that would enhance its urban mission.

Mississippi Valley State University needs to be given the authority and funding to enable it to become a full-fledged technical university on the order of Texas Technical University, Georgia Institute of Technology, Louisiana Technical University, and Tennessee Technical University, with programs in transportation, computer technology, construction, and others that would enhance its original mission as a vocational institution.

B. Programs, Facilities, and Equipment – Funding for programs, equipment, and facilities need to be at equitable levels with those of Mississippi State University, Delta State University, Mississippi University for Women, University of Mississippi, and University of Southern

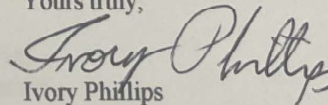
Mississippi. This especially includes core programs, student services, and offices as well as bringing existing programs up to the appropriate levels.

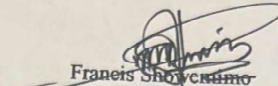
- C. Salaries – Faculty and Staff salaries at Mississippi Valley State, Alcorn State, and Jackson State need to be raised to those of employees at the comprehensive universities; paying the same salaries to persons with the same rank, years of experience, and general job responsibilities.
 - D. Scholarships – Mississippi Valley State, Jackson State, and Alcorn State need an allocation of funds to maintain a pool of scholarships, fellowships, and assistantships similar to those maintained by the comprehensive universities.
 - E. Reparations – A budget structure should be developed that will provide for the regular operation of all of the universities, plus a 10% allocation for the historically Black universities as compensation for past discrimination.
3. The proposed settlement agreement enshrines a misplaced conception of the problem of segregation.
Solution: Remove the onus of requiring Jackson State, Mississippi Valley State, and Alcorn State to secure a 10% White enrollment in order to spend the public and private endowment money. Instead, allow the endowment monies to be used to improve the programs and facilities, which in turn should result in more White students choosing to attend the historically Black universities.
4. The proposed settlement agreement does nothing about the governance of the universities.
Solution: Each university should have a representative on the College Board. These persons should be selected by the respective universities and should not include administrators.
5. A mechanism must be set up to monitor the implementation of whatever agreement is reached. It is proposed that a body be established that would include, but not be limited to the faculty, students, staff, and citizens of the plaintiff class.

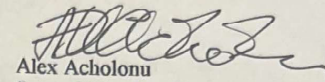
We have discussed these ideas among ourselves and our constituencies. We hereby submit them for your favorable consideration.

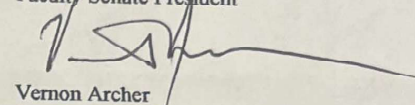
We thank you very much for your co-operation and understanding in this matter. We would appreciate your favorable action on the same.

Yours truly,


Ivory Phillips
President


Francis Shoyemimo
First Vice President


Alex Acholonu
Second Vice President
and Alcorn State University
Faculty Senate President


Vernon Archer
Faculty Senate President
Jackson State University

cc. President Clinton Bristow
President Ronald Mason
President Lester Newman
Members of the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning
Attorney General Mike Moore
News Media
Congressman Bennie Thompson-
Alcorn State University National Alumni Association
Jackson State University National Alumni Association
Mississippi Valley State University National Alumni Association
Alcorn State University Faculty Senate
Jackson State University Faculty Senate
Mississippi Valley State University Faculty Senate
Alcorn State University Student Government Association
Jackson State University Student Government Association
Mississippi Valley State University Student Government Association