

## **Anti-Racism Movement (ARM)**

### **Press Statement**

**June 25, 2008**

**Re: Scheduled meeting with WHAM Radio's management concerning recent insensitive, inappropriate, unacceptable, on-air comments by radio talk show host Bob Lonsberry**

The recent (June 10, 2008) comments made by Bob Lonsberry on WHAM 1180 were an unacceptable continuation of Mr. Lonsberry's history of on-air racism, sexism and classism. For far too long Mr. Lonsberry has been permitted to cross the boundaries of decent discourse. It is apparent that he feels entirely comfortable, to say nothing of completely justified, in making hateful, hurtful, and erroneous statements about people of color, women, and people who are poor. His expressed views both tap and reinforce an undercurrent of hostility, which serves to perpetuate the social divisions of our community and calls to question our community's resolve to eradicate those divisions.

Therefore, it is with a high degree of resolve that ARM calls for the removal of Bob Lonsberry from the public airwaves. The offensive content of Mr. Lonsberry's remarks will not be allowed to hang, unchallenged, in our communal air. No individual should have the sense of entitlement that permits them to continually pollute that communal air.

Specifically, we are outraged that Mr. Lonsberry believes he can, with impunity:

**Disrespect young women who have overcome obstacles by stereotyping them as immoral, while choosing to ignore the varied circumstances, both social and individual, that created those obstacles in the first place**

**Demean these young women by the use of blatantly sexist language**

**Disparage the hard work of African American students by arbitrarily de-valuing the considerable achievement of attaining a grade B average**

Hidden behind and woven throughout these positions are the archetypal images conjured by white supremacists as justification for the exploitation of Africans and African Americans, i.e. laziness, inferior intellect, uncontrolled libido, etc.

ARM believes that the beloved community we envision and call forth is achieved by, among other things, lifting up our younger members, supporting them, guiding them, and applauding their successes. Mr. Lonsberry's mean spirited tone does not resonate with that call or that vision. ARM will purposefully and vigorously work to create and nurture a community where there is no comfort level for such racist, sexist, and classist attacks. The days when racism could be equated with "business as usual" are over.

Mr. Lonsberry and those for whom he speaks need to know that large numbers of us within the Rochester community aspire to a higher standard.

Mr. Lonsberry and those for whom he speaks need to know that Mr. Lonsberry must go.