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Denison Board of Trustees Makes Statement on Black Demands

Denison University

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RELEASE

Denison Board of Trustees Makes
Statement on Black Demands

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GRANVILLE, OHIO -- Denison University's Board of Trustees held a special meeting last weekend to review a situation created on campus as the result of a document issued by an organization of Denison students Dec. 19 entitled "Black Student Union Demands" and the subsequent responses to the document.

The full text of the Board's statement is being released this week to all alumni, parents, students, and friends of the university by President Joel P. Smith.

The Trustees reaffirmed a resolution adopted May 31, 1968, which states "that Denison University should take affirmative steps to improve opportunities for larger numbers of Negro students to contribute to the life of the University" and then conferred with members of the Task Force created by the faculty Jan. 20 to make recommendations for specific courses of action.

The Board also stated that Denison's aim is to provide undergraduate educational programs of high quality, and this aim governs the selection of faculty, the selection of students, the development of curriculum, the establishment and operation of departments of instruction, and the working out of administrative organization and processes.

The Trustees emphasized that they believe that opportunities at Denison for black students to study and live can be and will be improved, but expressed the feeling that these must be developed with consideration of the college's basic aim and careful analysis of the implications.

Essentially the demands call for (1) hiring more black professors, two black students advisers, and a black recruiter; (2) increasing black student

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enrollment with priority consideration for admissions and financial aid; (3) establishing an Afro-American studies department; and (4) inclusion of more black curricular material in courses and use of more black resource personnel.

The Board committed itself to prompt consideration of forthcoming recommendations from the faculty-student Task Force. The Board expressed confidence that the Task Force would deal with the issues in a careful and thoughtful way and would consider them in the interests of the college as a whole.

Proceeding to give a blanket endorsement of the demands without adequate consideration of the implications that might result would be acting contrary to the best interests of the college in the Board's judgment. Consequently it expressed support and offered guidelines to facilitate the Task Force.

The Task Force, as constituted by the faculty, will consist of seven faculty members and four students. Appointed director of the Task Force is Dr. Louis F. Brakeman, professor and chairman of political science.

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