

3-13-1970

SASS

Swarthmore Afro-American Students' Society

Swarthmore College

Swarthmore, Pennsylvania 19081

March 13, 1970

Robert Cross
President of Swarthmore College

President Cross:

SASS regrets that you ignored the detailed insistence of our letter of March 11, 1970. Moreover, we reject the terms under which Robinson House has been offered. The first requirement you mentioned is that the Center be subject to general College policies and regulations. A Black Cultural Center is necessary precisely because these policies and regulations have excluded and/or subordinated the interests of black people; it is imperative that new policies and regulations, ones that are defined and implemented primarily through the black perspective be found. Provided that the specifications outlined in our letter of March 11 are met in toto, a working group designed to implement these criteria is acceptable to SASS.

However, the distinction you have made between determination of programs and determination of access to the center, breadth of participation in its activities, and methods of funding the center and its activities, is in fact no distinction at all. The concepts of self-determination are crucial components of our position, and if they are not recognized at Swarthmore College, (as is seemingly indicated now) we take this to mean that it is not possible for black people to exist here in a dignified way. We refuse to be cast as black puppets in a black play written, directed and sold out to white people: SRO for the black community.

SASS

Swarthmore Afro-American Students' Society

Swarthmore College

Swarthmore, Pennsylvania 19081

We are calling a press conference to dispel the notion currently propagated through the media that the issue of a Black Cultural Center, operating according to the needs of the Black community of Swarthmore College is settled; and to inform you that the Black student community ~~is~~ here, in a sincere effort to resolve these difficulties, so that we might survive as spiritual, moral, intellectual and social beings at white-defined, white-controlled, and white-dominated Swarthmore College, are occupying the good President's office until such time as the legitimacy of our position is acknowledged in toto, or until we are confronted with the threat of legal, forcible removal, i.e. institutionalized violence; our sit-in is peaceful, orderly and is resorted to only after it is clear that the integrity of a philosophy of Black liberation is not respected at ~~a~~ white Swarthmore College. Our repeated attempts to plead rationally, has fallen on cold, insensitive ears; we move now only at the apex of frustration and disillusionment. We trust that the public will see that ours is a humane cause.

- 1) support of Black administrators
- 2) support of most Black workers here
- 3) support of large part of Student body.
- 4) we have moved out of the dormitories.

Debi

SASS

Swarthmore Afro-American Students' Society

Swarthmore College

Swarthmore, Pennsylvania 19081

Your letter was conspicuous in its absence of specifics with reference to financial allocations, and its ambiguity and power-oriented euphemisms are once again indicative of more attempts to avoid total commitment to some semblance of black power and black liberation.

The deadline is past.

SASS