

The Phoenix

SUPPLEMENT

JANUARY 11, 1969

ETHERIDGE, STOTT MEET IN MEDIA

Clinton Etheridge and Don Mizell (chairman and vice-chairman of SASS, respectively) and Mr. Gilmore Stott (Administrative Assistant to President Smith) met at the Media Fellowship House yesterday at noon in response to telegrams from Mr. Robert Woodson, head of the Fellowship House, for a press conference and a luncheon. Woodson was emphatic at both gatherings in stating that the affair was designed to "air publically" the situation at Swarthmore from both points of view. He further asserted that the Media Fellowship House was not trying to mediate the dispute, nor had it taken on the support of either contender, but that he reserved the right to take a definitive position at a later time.

The press conference was short, consisting essentially of prepared position statements from Mr. Stott and the SASS leaders. Mr. Stott, speaking first, stressed the irony of the present crisis, in light of the fact that there seems to be a great deal of agreement between the SASS demands as expressed in its December 23 letter to President Smith, and the final conclusions of the Admissions Policy Committee report, made public right after vacation (January 6). With this view, Stott criticized the Black organization's timing of the January 7 ultimatum and the January 9 demands, since, in his opinion, the situation was resolvable without resort to the action which has followed.

Clinton Etheridge began the SASS position with a prepared statement: "In our action, we are seeking a relevant education for both black and white students in this day and time. For too long and too often, white liberals at Swarthmore have been defining, redefining, analyzing, synthesizing, and intellectualizing the problems of black people. Our objective, by contrast, is a rational, democratic process whereby all interest groups are reflected and represented. Unless these kinds of demands are met, there can ultimately be no creative solution to the greatest domestic crisis of this century." Mizell followed up this statement with a rereading of the SASS demands as of January 9, including the original demands made in the December 23 letter.

Following the press conference, at which Channel 6 TV, Philadelphia, and various newspapers were represented, came a luncheon-discussion from which all members of the professional news media were excluded by the request of Mr. Woodson, in the interest of an unhindered exchange of views. Etheridge began the discussion with a speech concerned basically with the historical background from which the present crisis evolved.

For a long time, said Etheridge, Black students had faith in the efficacy of the traditional channels for change. The experiences of this year, however, served as a "rude awakening" for SASS members. The SASS chairman began the documentation of his case by explaining the injustices that were perpetrated in the promulgation of

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Dean Hargadon's original working paper on Black admissions. Etheridge indicated that the complete absence of consultation with Blacks on the formation of this report is a manifestation of "the failure of well-intentioned white liberals on this campus to realize that a uniquely Black perspective exists", and that this perspective, this life-style, cannot be properly understood or reckoned with without direct involvement of Blacks.

When SASS promulgated its first set of demands in October, the feeling of the group was such that they had "to shock these people out of their complacency." When Student Council passed a resolution supporting the demands, Dean Hargadon, according to Etheridge, sent a critical letter to SC in which he indicated, among other things, that his own admission of the members of SC had been a mistake in judgment in light of their subsequent behavior.

At this point, Etheridge continued, the legitimacy of SASS as a representative organ for the Black community was contested. It was subsequently pointed out that those Blacks who did not belong to SASS nevertheless supported, and still support, the demands.

Finally, when SASS representatives tried to have outside Black admissions professionals brought to the campus to help advise the Admissions Policy Committee in its deliberations, Dean Hargadon declined the offers on the grounds that the committee was too busy for such criticism, albeit constructive.

Although President Smith tried to arrange a vacation meeting with Etheridge, the latter declined on the grounds that he could not engage in talks without consulting the members of his group first.

The rationale behind the final action, the taking of the Admissions Office, was simply that the demands had been over-looked, and that the only way to spur authorities into immediate recognition of the urgency of the demands was to take immediate direct action themselves. The demands became non-negotiable when it became apparent that the administration had ignored SASS' previous desire to negotiate.

Mr. Stott, in his response to this history of grievances, addressed himself to the lack of trust and confidence between the disputing parties, maintaining that in real terms, both parties' positions had too much in common for real division. He noted that the concern and sincerity of the administrators were cast into question by SASS' latest actions. Admitting that some mistakes had been made and that slowness to act was one of these, Stott contended that some progress had been made in the furtherance of the goals and "felt needs" of the Black community. He was emphatic in assuring his audience that ideas from both sides will be fully considered in faculty meetings, and that all possible steps were now being made to resolve the crisis for all concerned as soon as possible. One issue, in relation to admissions, that Mr. Stott felt to be basic was the balance between "quality education and social equality" as goals for Swarthmore College. Neither side in this meeting saw any serious conflict in these two goals.

SASS RADIO STATEMENT POSTPONED

WSRN reports that as of 11:30 last night, SASS decided to take more time to consider the statement that had been scheduled for release then. The station will announce the time of any future SASS statements.

EXTENDED FACULTY MEETING CONSIDERS ADMISSIONS

In the second faculty meeting to act on the admissions problems, four concrete proposals were adopted with a large measure of consensus. The faculty members of the Council on Educational Policy were asked by President Smith to prepare an agenda for the meeting (which lasted from 4 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. with a dinner break) and the following motion was passed with regard to that agenda: "That the faculty adopt the agenda as presented by faculty members of the Council on Educational Policy, and continue working with this agenda and other items connected with it in continuous session until we have disposed of all of them".

First on the agenda was "discussion with students", which included speeches by Clinton Etheridge, chairman of SASS, and Mike Fields, a non-SASS Black student who supports the demands and the actions of the members of that organization.

The second motion passed by the faculty was more elaborate than its correlative on the agenda, but both were in basic agreement that: "The College recognizes that it is necessary to maintain a viable Black student community. Realizing that such a community ultimately depends on the decision of the students both to enroll and to continue their education at Swarthmore, the College will strive to enroll a minimum of 25 Black students in each freshman class. It is hoped that this number can be increased to 35 after a three-year period." This recommendation was essentially the same as the SASS demand of December 23 dealing with numbers of Black students to be enrolled.

It is important to note here that the faculty voted last Tuesday to center debate on the demands made by SASS on the above date, and not the proposals made by the Admissions Policy Committee. With some changes, the faculty discussion has been essentially consistent with this distinction.

The third proposal, perhaps a corollary to the second, read as follows: "That the College should set as its goal the enrollment of a significant number (approximately ten) of so-called 'risk' Black students for the academic year 1969-1970." The only difference between this proposal and the demand parallel to it is that the "significant number" was defined by SASS as ten to twenty.

On the other hand, it is important to consider that an amendment to the third proposal (the amendment to the effect that a Black Assistant Dean of Admissions be appointed, subject to consultation with SASS) was defeated by the faculty, and that this amendment would have been the equivalent of the SASS demand for such a Dean.

Again, a faculty spokesman emphasized that the proposals made so far are by no means comprehensive. The first motion indicates that the faculty plans to consider all issues concerning the SASS demands. Issues already on the agenda (lack of time prevented their consideration last night) include post-enrollment support programs for "risk" students, the possible reappraisal of budgetary priorities, and plans for "increased academic assistance to those who appear to be greater academic risks."

The faculty will hold another meeting to continue with their deliberations tomorrow at 10 a.m.

MODERATES VIEW PROPOSALS

A meeting for moderates attracted about 200 students to Commons at 7 p.m. John Edgar and Tom Hammond led the discussion. The meeting entertained several proposals, but produced no votes or resolutions.

The main topics of discussion were 1) student week: whether students should ask for it immediately or defer it until February; 2) a student-faculty senate: whether there should be one at all, and, if so, how it should be composed and how much power it should have. The group also dwelled on the relationship between the SASS demands and action and the issue of general reform of the college decision-making process.

Toward the end of the meeting, views were traded on the relations of so-called moderate opinions to those expressed in radical caucuses. An informal poll of those remaining showed overwhelming disapproval of a continuation on Monday of the suspension of classes.

Jim Stark proposed that moderates identify their proposals more explicitly and effectively through a political organization. He called a meeting in the Rathskellar to draw up a platform. The move was opposed by some on the grounds that it drew too-sharp lines within an essentially cohesive student body. The chairmen adjourned the meeting until 12:30 Saturday, at which time it would discuss specific proposals presented in the morning.

SASS STATEMENT

It is clear from statements of unequivocal support from Black students, Black workers, and numerous political, economic and religious groups in the Black communities of Philadelphia and Delaware County that SASS's action is indeed representative of the needs and desires of the Black community at large.

Ideas which are so contrary to this obvious majority cited by any single individual must be viewed with suspicion. In this case, it is clear, but unfortunate, that the product of an allegedly educational institution is so unable to comprehend our oft-stated goals. In fact, that there are such examples of the college's failure to train its students to analyze such simple demands is the very reason we must continue to reject this type of education.

The administration's past arguments have been rejected; any re-statement of their position--no matter who makes it, and under what guise of authority--is a choice to ignore and to misrepresent the true issues. Must we again state our position?

Because we seek to redefine the underlying philosophy of education here, we must reevaluate the standards which support it. The concept of a "risk" student, implies that there are those who cannot succeed in this academic system; but we reject this system itself. We seek to make education here more responsive to the human needs of people both in and outside of the college walls; and this implies changes on all levels in the present system of policy-making. Any threat to the power of interests as entrenched as those which now direct Swarthmore College will inevitably be countered with recrimination, personal attack and distortion of the issues, to divert attention from the need for change. We are not afraid to face this latest attack; and we do not face it alone.

SASS

MIKE FIELDS REACTS TO MORROW LETTER

As an independent Black and a student at Swarthmore, my reaction to Mr. Morrow's letter was at first anger, then disbelief, and finally sadness. The Swarthmore that Mr. Morrow graduated from was the Swarthmore in which I began my education during the fall of 1964. It is not the Swarthmore from which I will be graduating. Times, places, and people change. As Mr. Englund pointed out in Clothier Thursday, four years ago there was no "Negro" problem;—but then there were too few of us to be a problem.

(I also remember the frequent bull sessions that I, along with the few other Black men students had in Mr. Morrow's room. Maybe we were all insecure and huddling together in a strange and often hostile environment.) These are the reasons for my sadness.

I was angry because, as I look over 300 years of Black history, when I can get access to it, there has always been someone willing to play the role he has chosen. Brothers have always been too easily separated by the artificial distinctions of color and education; and whites have never had to look far to find brothers, however misguided, to perform their dirty work. Fortunately, this is changing with time, and such brothers are becoming scarce.

I did not believe Mr. Morrow's letter because much of it is untrue and misleading. At the original admissions meeting, Mr. Morrow stated that he did not feel that the administration should have consulted any students, much less Black students on admissions policy; and while I am forced to agree that the whole matter of admissions policy would have been solved peacefully, I question whether it would have been reasonably.

Fortunately, this is one of the respects in which Swarthmore has changed since Mr. Morrow graduated. SASS has never asked for the admission of risk students "because they are Black", nor disregarded the problem of their welfare once they get here. If Mr. Morrow will direct his attention to the demands, quite clearly stated is cognizance of the need for supportive programs and preparatory programs to prepare them "academically" for Swarthmore. "Risk" students are not necessarily "academically" unqualified in that they can't do the work, but perhaps they never learned to play the game in such a way as can be measured by academic criteria (e.g. College Board scores). Thus it does not necessarily follow that this entails a lowering of Swarthmore's standards, but rather an extension of the opportunity to be raised up to Swarthmore's standards and the extension of the potential Black leadership class beyond the middle class. Finally, Mr. Morrow says that the members of SASS are dissatisfied, insecure, and egoistic. To the first, quite clearly the members of SASS are dissatisfied. I find it hard to believe that any Black person in this country can be satisfied, and if we are merely dissatisfied after 300 years of oppression then this country is luckier than it deserves. I would say, yes, the members of SASS are insecure. I do not know how any Black person can be secure in a country in which the greatest problem is white racism (Kerner Commission Report). In such a case, to be secure might be deadly. (The Jews in Germany were secure.) If it is egoistic not to be willing to wait for what others—the "man" Mr. Charles, or Chuck—is willing to give his good little darkies when he is willing to give it; if it is egoistic to want to be dealt with as an equal (when you don't have any power, you end up making compromises to the other side: they have no need to compromise) and from a position of respect, then I am afraid SASS is also egoistic.

We are all Brothers, and we are in this together. I will close this already too long letter by asking Mr. Morrow the question that Brother Malcolm asked a Black professor serving on the faculty of a large liberal institution. "What is a Negro Ph.D. called?" The answer to that question is "Nigger!" And that is why we must

be united and stand together, because no matter what the color of our skin, our educational background, or any other artificial distinctions we could make, when it gets down to the nitty gritty, we are still all "Niggers".

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION PROPOSED

(Editor's note: The following proposal is included in The Phoenix because it was formulated too late to be printed with the other proposals.)

We urge the students and faculty to consider this proposal in the workshops, meetings, and plenary sessions today.

A Constitutional Convention shall be convened in February to review and determine all aspects of the decision-making processes of the College. The composition of the convention shall insure a just representation of all elements of the community. The members shall be elected by their constituencies: 25 students, 20 faculty, 10 administration and members of the Board of Managers.

Ron Thomas
Lauren Brubaker
Roger Wood
John Edgar
Tom Hammond
Sue Snider
Lyle Snider
Anne Newman
Mike Miller

COALITION SEEKS BROAD-BASED STUDENT ACTION

An eight-hour meeting of a coalition group of SASS supporters ended early this morning with the formulation of a request to the faculty for immediate perusal and support of the content of all SASS demands. Composed of so-called radicals, moderates, and many undefined participants, the coalition voted to present a conciliatory statement to the Faculty Agenda Committee, asking for faculty acceptance of the eight SASS demands to the satisfaction of SASS before the night of Sunday, January 12.

Attempting to establish an agenda for action, the group first dealt with the possible impact with direct action by a radical minority might have upon the student body. On the broader issue of student power, the coalition recognized the influence of SASS' unprecedented action. It was clearly emphasized that fellow students should never be the causes or targets of direct action. In response to continual debate over conflicting proposals, a distinction was made between action directly concerning SASS demands and that concerning the larger issue of student power. Discussion then centered upon the current SASS crisis with the assumption that certain parallels exist between the SASS situation and that of student power.

Because of the felt need for majority support of all initial student actions, the coalition sounded out moderate views as gleaned from the day's workshops. The

moderate leadership speculated that a majority of the students would support a move to suspend classes until SASS is satisfied. Efforts will be made today to prepare students for the possibility of suspension of academic functions. As a statement of the coalition's minimum necessary demands or goals to be approved by a student majority, a student/faculty senate proposal was voted down, but the coalition did view as mandatory the suspension of college classes until SASS demands are met.

Again the matter of student power arose. A Hammond-Brubaker proposal for a constitutional convention in February was welcomed but not voted on because it was felt that SASS should be the primary focus for the time being.

Several faculty members joined the group at 1 a.m. and presented an account of the faculty meeting. While gains had been made, it was feared that the most stressed parts of the SASS demands (especially dealing with Black student power) will not be passed by the faculty. It was felt that the faculty in continuous session is dealing not with the exigent SASS demands but solely with previously examined matters of Black admissions. The faculty agenda committee meets today at 9 a.m. and opinion was expressed that discussion will probably preclude student involvement in decision-making. Some skepticism had been raised as to the faculty's willingness to face the SASS demands from a concretely positive or negative viewpoint, and it was deemed crucial that the Swarthmore student body be aware of the faculty's alleged lack of desire to accept or reject the SASS proposals as they stand.

At this point Greg Englund's motion for the request to the faculty was presented and eventually passed, with further action by the coalition dependent on activities of SASS and of the student body as a whole today. The coalition will meet at 4 p.m. in Tarbles S.C. room.