

ROBERT M. BROWNING  
HEWITT HILL FARM  
RURAL DELIVERY 2  
SOUTH ROYALTON, VERMONT 05068

March 19, 1970

Dr. Robert D. Cross  
President  
Swarthmore College  
Swarthmore, Pennsylvania 19081

Dear Bob:

It is always easy and also a great temptation to look back after a critical event and second-guess how it might have been handled. I have no desire to do that with respect to the activities in your office ten days ago, but I do think that you and I might consider a somewhat more precise set of do's and don't's based on this past experience. Thus, I am setting forth my thoughts, which are advanced not as hard and fast guidelines, but as procedures we should expect to follow.

1. Should there again be any contrary act, it seems to me that it would be well to be rather strict in our interpretation as to whether it is "disruptive" or not. If it is in any way disruptive, a warning to cease should be given quite promptly with a limited time for compliance, and as one of your memos outlined, the definition of subsequent steps if the warning was not followed. It seems to me further that it is highly undesirable to permit any vigil or sit-in in administrative or academic buildings overnight.
2. I would strongly urge that we make it clear that we cannot negotiate during a disruption. I recall the comments made during our meeting last Sunday, and I would agree that communications are vital and must be kept open, but I feel sure that we could avoid a great deal of trouble in the long run by not negotiating during a disruption.
3. It is obviously quite difficult to know how to deal with new demands and new arrangements, some may have considerable legitimacy and warrant a prompt response, and it may be the

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better judgment in connection with others to accept some compromise, and of course, some will have to be rejected.

However, where there is the possible need for a new arrangement which would conspicuously change our past patterns, I think you should seek the reaction and counsel of the Executive Committee. I think in many instances, it is unfair to you to make a difficult decision with respect to something new on your own without benefit of the Executive Committee's reaction. I also feel that the Executive Committee should have the "pleasure" of expressing itself before decisions and share responsibility for any major new policies.

This, Bob, I know is quite a ticklish relationship problem, and I would hope that it could be made to work in such a way that there would never be a question of your authority or your final responsibility for dealing with the college problems, and yet I feel strongly there is real advantage in having our Board leadership express themselves earlier as new propositions are developing.

4. I think any student disruptions, confrontations, etc. should always be handled by the college administration, not the faculty and not the board. As you are able to carry out your own administrative organization development, I would hope that the Dean of Deans or the Provost or some other officer could assume the immediate front-line position, permitting you to remain uncommitted until it was clear just what should be done and until it was clear that such action would bring the disruption to an end.

If you concur with these points or if you want to suggest modifications and/or additions, I would like to review them with



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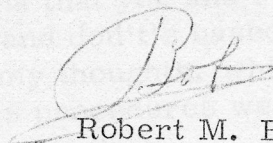
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our Executive Committee at our next meeting. I think they are all in line with the principles laid out in our "Crises Statement" as developed last spring.

I will probably be in Vermont until Sunday or Monday, the 5th or 6th of April. However, I am quite available should there be any reason to come back earlier.

Kind regards.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bob", is written over the printed name.

Robert M. Browning

RMB:daw