

Courtney

President/Smith's Statement to the Faculty and Students
of Swarthmore College presented at 1:45 P.M. on
13 January 1969 in Clothier Memorial Hall

Let me say just a few words about what I think
we have been doing.

In my letter of December 31st to the Faculty I asked
our entire College community to consider conscientiously and
imaginatively the best way to achieve what I believed to be
the underlying concerns of SASS*, and of the Admissions
Policy Committee. I believe that we have been doing that.

Certainly the Faculty, for which I can speak as its
presiding officer, has responded in a way that has deepened,
if that were possible, my pride in Swarthmore. The Faculty
met in long sessions -- last Tuesday afternoon, Thursday
night, Friday afternoon, Friday night, Saturday morning,
Saturday afternoon, Sunday morning from 10:00 A.M. to close
to 2:00 P.M., Sunday afternoon from 3:30 P.M./close to
7:00 P.M., and Sunday night from 8:30 P.M. to around 3:30 A.M.
One faculty member reports that his youngest child did not
recognize him when he got home for a quick meal. At about
3:20 A.M. this morning Professor Alburt Rosenberg rose to
say that from his supply of three buttons he carries with
him for his lapel he was going to change to a new one with
three words on it. While he tried to find the button, the
weary faculty naturally speculated on the words, with "We
Try Harder" a leading possibility. The button he actually
put on had only two words -- "Escalate Peace."

*Swarthmore Afro-American Students' Society

I strongly support the actions we have taken as a Faculty, and I will strongly support them to the Board of Managers. I am confident that the Board shares the same values and concerns that have motivated the Faculty in our actions. I feel so sure of the Board's feelings on these matters that I am ready to begin immediately to implement the actions we have taken.

What we have passed is clear to those of us who have passed it, and we believe it to be right. Details will have to be worked out as we go along, just as details of our Commission on Educational Policy actions have to be worked out every day, but I see no problems in that if, as I am assuming, we can work in a spirit of mutual trust. I hope, I pray, there will not be any who will seek to sow distrust. I am sure SASS will want to work in a spirit of mutual trust, and I call on all of us to seek and work through the good in each other.

It is possible to use our present problem to escalate real and fancied differences that exist in any community. But I would ask of all of us never to trade Swarthmore's excellence and fineness and readiness to hold itself open to new light, from whatever source it comes, never to trade these things for slogans and hate. It took no force to bring about comprehensive proposals for the development of Black Studies. It took no force to bring about our fundamental and comprehensive examination of ourselves in our Commission on Educational Policy. Students were involved, were urged to be involved, in

all of those considerations. I realize that some now sneer at the CEP, but there was no sneering in the Danforth groups and no sneering in the referendum which students were urged to take in order to express themselves on every one of the recommendations.

We have lost something precious at Swarthmore -- the feeling that force and disruptiveness are just not our way. But maybe we can see to it that this one time is only the exception that proves the rule. For certainly if there are any who now think that direct action should eventually be used for Black Studies, or Student Week, or any proposals that might come out of a Student Week, or the Sex Rule, or Dormitory Autonomy, or the University City Science Center, or the Physical Education requirement, or Beards, or on the question of institutional structure and the governance of higher education /Let me digress to say that I am far from convinced that the prevailing system of governance of higher education in America is right for our times, though I am also far from convinced that it is wrong ; and I am very conscious of the fact that the abstractions of the description of the governance of our own particular institution always obscure the basic humanity and warmth with which we have tried to proceed; But these matters of governance are in my opinion ones for deep and thoughtful consideration/ then, to come back ^{from} my digression, I have to say that I seriously doubt their faith in education,

and the educational process, and I would be saddened to see further acceptance of force as against those qualities of trust and tolerance and humility and anti-totalitarianism and willingness to seek the good in others -- those qualities especially that have made, and can make, Swarthmore ~~uniquely~~ "fine".
~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ as an institution.