

UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA 19104

February 28, 1969

To Our Alumni and Friends:

A five-day demonstration at the University of Pennsylvania ended on February 23rd, after the Executive Board of the Trustees advanced a plan whereby the University will assume an innovating and participatory role in promoting the welfare of the urban community adjoining its campus.

Though characterized in the press as "sit-in," with emphasis on the negative aspects of such occurrences on campuses today, it was a continuing dialogue between sincerely concerned groups, and in its broader aspects was a most significant educational experience for all participants. In its course a thoughtful and responsible majority evolved able leadership, avoided hazardous extremes, and achieved a constructive consensus uniting and energizing the widely divergent communities of students, faculty, administration, and Trustees that represent a university.

We wish our alumni, the parents of our students, and other friends of Pennsylvania to be informed of the following facts about the events of these five days. A detailed account will appear later in the "Pennsylvania Gazette."

1. The underlying aim of the demonstration was to persuade the University to exercise a more active and outreaching responsibility for the housing and well-being of its neighbors, particularly those of little means who might be displaced by the growth of the University and other nearby institutions such as The University City Science Center. (UCSC is a research and development complex in which the University is a major participant among 21 member institutions.)
2. Concern for the welfare of the University's neighbors coincided with the personal convictions of many of the administrative officers, the faculty, and the Trustees; consequently the Executive Board was able, in good conscience, to propose a mutually satisfactory course of action.
3. The demonstration was legal and civilized. The University's guidelines defining the limits of acceptable behavior were scrupulously respected. Although the demonstrators congregated in College Hall in numbers fluctuating between a handful and several hundreds, no passages were obstructed, no academic or administrative activity was impeded, no violence occurred, no

offices were occupied, no property was damaged or even left untidy, and no police were present.

4. Throughout the period, our students generally, including many of the demonstrators, attended classes as usual.
5. Intelligent, reasonable communication between spokesmen for the demonstrators and representatives of the Administration and Trustees was continual.

Specifically, the Executive Board proposed to establish a quadripartite commission on which the Trustees, the faculty, the students, and the community will have equal representation. This commission will mobilize the expertise and resources of the University and its adjoining community in order to achieve adequate housing for the low-income families in the neighborhood, and also monitor future physical development to insure replacement of any such housing that would be demolished.

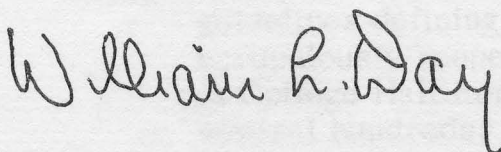
The Executive Board further offered to seek a fund of \$10,000,000 from moneys allocated expressly for community renewal programs by such sources as Government, banks, and insurance companies; and it committed \$75,000 of University funds for the staffing and operation of the quadripartite commission.

The significance of these actions, we believe, is captured in this excerpt from the Executive Board's statement:

"The Trustees declare a policy of accountability and responsibility that accepts the concerns and aspirations of the surrounding communities as (the University's) own concerns and aspirations..."

We are encouraged by the unity of purpose that has emerged from last week's tempering by debate, and are reassured by the many evidences of commonality of concern with our neighbors that promise continuing support for the enterprise we are undertaking. We trust that the policy of responsibility for our urban neighbors may serve as a helpful pattern for urban institutions elsewhere in the nation.

We share the widespread indignation over the wave of disruption that has swept so many other campuses. We have at Pennsylvania a clearly stated, enforceable policy that protects the rights of the student majority whose overriding concern is the pursuit of education while duly safeguarding the rights of all to express themselves peaceably. We are gratified that the University community has shown its unreserved concurrence in this policy.



William L. Day
Chairman of the Trustees



Gaylord P. Harnwell
President