

SWARTHMORE COLLEGE
Swarthmore, Pennsylvania

8 January 1969

To the Faculty, Staff, and Students:

Opening a meeting of the Faculty of Swarthmore College on Tuesday afternoon, 7 January 1969, President Smith announced that the faculty will meet weekly throughout January, and as long as is necessary thereafter, to discuss four important topics in the following order: 1) black admissions policy, 2) the proposed Black Studies program, 3) the proposed Student Week, and 4) the reports of the Student Life Committee and the Expanded Student Affairs Committee.

President Smith, after briefly reviewing the history of the continuing efforts of Swarthmore College to recruit and enroll black students, reported to the faculty on his meeting with SASS on Monday, 6 January 1969, in which he discussed with them their demands made 23 December 1968, and explained more fully his response which was set forth in a memorandum to the faculty on 31 December 1968. He said that SASS had insisted that the President make a strong statement to the Faculty calling for the College to accept and implement SASS's demands.

In the general discussion that followed, a number of faculty members urged that lines of direct communication be opened between the faculty and SASS in order that members of SASS, as well as the student body at large, be made aware of the deep concern felt by the entire faculty over the problem of black admissions at Swarthmore and in order that SASS could discuss these problems with the faculty. It was suggested that members of SASS be invited to a meeting of the faculty to participate in the discussion, or, alternatively, that SASS be invited to hold a forum open to the faculty and members of the student body for such discussion. When it was pointed out that only ten members of the faculty had attended the meeting sponsored by SASS and the Student Council at 12:30 this afternoon (7 January), many members of the faculty indicated that they had not yet received notice of this meeting.

Several members of the faculty, noting the substantial areas of agreement between the demands of SASS and the proposals of the Admissions Policy Committee (30 December 68), suggested that the faculty take immediate action on those proposals on which there was substantial agreement. Others, however, felt that this would represent only token action on the part of the faculty, and that the overall implications of all proposals deserved careful and serious discussion and consideration in the meetings now scheduled.

President Smith said that he felt almost everyone in this community wished to achieve the goals that determine the major thrust of the report of the Admissions Policy Committee and the demands of SASS. He said he was sure there was no disagreement about increasing the number of black students, faculty members, and administrators. A judgment about numbers of high risk students does involve a basic issue to be resolved by the faculty. Swarthmore College has historically defined itself as a college with a highly selected student body and a challenging academic program. In the light of current social urgencies, should the College redefine itself, and if so, to what extent and in what direction?

The faculty decided first to consider the proposals of SASS and of the Admissions Policy Committee, and voted to base its discussion on the SASS demands. In the ensuing lengthy and complex discussion, however, it became apparent that the SASS demands entailed complications and implications that were not immediately apparent and could not be resolved in this first meeting on the subject.

The faculty, however, unanimously passed the following resolution, based upon the memorandum from the Student Council:
"We favor a substantial increase in the number of black students. We favor immediate interim steps to increase the number of black students in the class of 1973 (including the admission of "risk" students). We recognize the need for a more viable life for black students here (including the appointment of black administrators and counselors)."

In conclusion, the faculty passed the following motion by a unanimous vote: "That the faculty invite SASS to a meeting with the faculty next Friday between 4:00 and 5:00 p.m., or at their convenience before Friday."

David Cowden
Secretary to the Faculty