

BLACK STUDENT STATEMENT AND PETITION TO NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATORS, RECEIVED MONDAY, APRIL 22, 1968.

We, the Black students at Northwestern University have found the academic, cultural, and social conditions for us on the campus deplorably limited. In order to counteract the physical, emotional, and spiritual strains we have been subjected to, in order to find some meaning and purpose in our being here, we demand that the following conditions be immediately met.

I. POLICY STATEMENT:

We demand, firstly, that a policy statement be issued from the administration deploring the viciousness of 'white racism' and insuring that all conscious or unconscious racist policies, practices, and institutions existing now on campus will no longer be tolerated. This statement should make it clear that Northwestern is willing to go to any extent to enforce such a policy and also to protect the interests of the Black students on campus who have been negatively affected by such racist attitudes and practices. Furthermore, this statement should express Northwestern's readiness to exert its influences (both political and financial, in uprooting racism in the city of Evanston).

II. ADMISSION:

Considering that Black people account for 12% of the total American population, we demand that Northwestern initiate a project which guarantees the gradual increase of the number of Black students to a more "realistic" figure which we shall decide. We demand also that we have some say in the development and initiation of such a project with Black students of our own choosing on the steering committee. We further demand that at least half (1/2) of each year's incoming Black students be from the inner school systems.

As for now, we demand a complete list containing the names of all Black students enrolled at Northwestern as of Fall Quarter 1967.

III. SCHOLARSHIPS:

We demand that our scholarships be increased to cover what is now included in our "required jobs" and to include funds for those who want or need to attend summer school. We have found that students who work because they want to, and not because they have to, perform much better academically and with less mental tension and frustration. Furthermore, we have found it a contradiction that in view of the fact that we inadequately prepared for the type of competition we encountered here at Northwestern, we were still expected to keep up and hold down a job simultaneously. We strongly feel, as well, that those Black students who want to continue their intellectual pursuits through the summer should have the same opportunity to do so as any other Northwestern student. The University should not deny them that opportunity by requiring that they work instead, in order to substantiate their scholarships for the other three quarters.

IV. HOUSING:

We demand that the University provide a living unit(s) for those Black students who want to live together. We demand that immediate action be taken to provide such a unit(s) by Fall Quarter 1968.

Inasmuch as that Black freshman women do not usually room with each other, we demand that they receive the same treatment as their white roommates. In the past, upon receiving room assignments, a white girl or her parents have been allowed to object to having a Negro for a roommate and upon either of their requests a shift in room assignments took place. We contend that if the girl or her parents wanted to be assured that she would not be rooming with a Negro, she should have stated on her housing form her preference of a Caucasian roommate to a Negro one. Black students did not even have the option to request another Black student for a roommate. We were told from the start that it was the University's intention to split us up and that we would not be allowed to room with each other.

Due to contradictory (racist) housing policies and practices, to the definite differences in social and cultural differences between us and our white roommates, and to the general tenseness of the racial situation, we demand that this Black living unit be made available to us by Fall quarter to help alleviate some of the tension of being "a Black student at a white university."

V. CURRICULUM:

We demand that a Black Studies Course be added to the curriculum including studies in Black history, literature, and art. In view of the fact that Black accomplishments have been underplayed and Black history misconstrued, we demand to have the ultimate decision in the choice of professors to be hired to teach these courses. There is no doubt, that since they inevitably must be "Black" professors, no one on the administration is capable of adequately judging their qualifications.

VI. COUNSELLING:

We demand that a Black Counselor be provided by the University in order to help us properly cope with the psychological, mental, and academic tensions resulting from the dualism of our existence as "black college students." There is a definite need for Black students seeking to overcome the contradictions of the demands placed on us by this white community, which offers little for us to identify with, and the demands of our own people and our native communities which look to us for some kind of inspiration, guidance, and instruction in the struggle to overcome white oppression, to have someone who can relate to us and understand us out of a common experience. The "Great White Father" image the university has been projecting must be destroyed if any real communication is to develop.

VII. FACILITIES:

We demand a Black Student Union, a place to be used for social and recreational activities, as well as, a place to office F.M.O. and all other Black organizations on campus. Black students have nothing at Northwestern to call our own. We need a place where we will feel free to come and to go as we please, a place which will substitute for the lack of fraternity and sorority houses and provide us with the necessary facilities to function as independently as the Student Senate office.

VIII. OPEN OCCUPANCY:

We are aware that Northwestern University has taken a stand in favor of Open Occupancy. However, what good, we ask, is such a stand when Northwestern is in effect the main promoter of segregation in the City of Evanston? We demand that the University immediately cease with this hypocrisy and take the necessary steps

to desegregate all of its real estate holdings. We further demand that evidence be presented to us, verifying that Northwestern is doing more than taking "a stand on Open Occupancy," and that monthly reports be turned over to the president of F.M.O. indicating N.U.'s subsequent progressive measures.

There has been too much idle talk about how to solve some of the problems facing Black students here at Northwestern. Indeed, there has been too much talk and too little action in regard to the general racial situation. We are not about to solve America's race problems, if there is in fact a solution; however, we are concerned about the problem as it affects us on campus and in the city of Evanston.

Northwestern was wrong to assume that in bringing us here, we would be able to disassociate ourselves from the injustices, sufferings, and mounting frustration of our people. Like them, we, too, are tired of being talked about and we are weary of talking to people who cannot or refuse to do anything else but talk.

It would be useless to engage in further discussion--there are some things which will never be understood, and even if they were understood, it would make little difference anyway. These are our demands of the University. We are willing to confer with the administration, but we have no intention of debating or conceding our stand. We have been to the administration before but with very little consequence. We want tangible results, not excuses or even promises. The University either responds to our demands or we have no other alternative but to respond to its lack of response. The University has until 5:00 p.m., Friday, April 26, 1968, to notify us of its decision.

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