

ORAL STATEMENT DELIVERED TO FRIENDS YEARLY MEETING BY  
CONCERNED STUDENTS AT HAVERFORD COLLEGE: MARCH 26, 1979

I am a Friend and a member of a group of students who are concerned about institutional racism at Haverford College. We too are involved in a query about our investments in South Africa. We would like to present a brief statement about another aspect of racism at Haverford. The problem is the under-representation of minorities in both the faculty and the student body. Likewise, the curriculum reflects the homogeneity of the college. Friend Herbert Standing has already spoken to this concern at Friday's Meeting for Worship. We feel that it is important to bring this situation to the attention of those outside of Haverford who are responsible for so much of its philosophy of community and education.

For the past ten years Haverford College has expressed a commitment to rectify these matters. In 1968 a large number of minorities were recruited, introducing to Haverford significantly different economic, social, and cultural backgrounds. This was a painful failure both for the students involved and for the administration. Although Haverford had successfully recruited minority students, insufficient emphasis had been placed on reform within the community and curriculum structures. The lesson of 1968 was sharp and clear, but, it was ignored.

Since that time, Haverford has continued to state its commitment to diversity yet the only changes in the structures of the college have been a direct result of student concern, actions and demands. For example, the committee charged to recruit minority faculty came into existence as late as 1977, a full 9 years after the commitment to a diverse Haverford community. Even this committee was instituted only when the Minority Coalition led students in a boycott of classes, a hunger strike, and silent confrontation of the faculty and Board of Managers.

This year after overt incidents of racism, the college held campus-wide meetings to confront the problem. Students expressed confusion, anger, and surprise, making clear the depth of the problem within Haverford itself. Unfortunately the issues were not effectively addressed nor were the questions pursued beyond discussion. As a result of the lack of concrete actions, a group of students presented a set of demands early this month. The demands stated that minority enrollment be increased to at least 20% up from the present figure of approximately 8%; that financial aid be found if needed to make the increase possible; that all prospective students be informed of the nature of racial tensions on campus; and that the college commit itself to reforming the curriculum. The faculty and administration rejected the demands stating that they were economically unrealistic and that students' methods and many of the specific concerns were unacceptable.

Those of us here today know that racism is not inherent in Haverford's philosophy of education although it is now an institutional reality. Commitment to increased admission of minorities and commitment to social and curricular reform is necessary to combat racism and it must come from the students, the faculty, and the administration. With this commitment, Haverford can adapt to accommodate minority and working class students if it truly wishes to achieve academic excellence. We appeal to the Friends of the Yearly Meeting as persons sharing concerns and ideals similar to ours

at Haverford, for assistance in confronting the difficult and subtle evil of racism.

Students are available outside to talk about this issue. We also have documents circulating if you wish to read them.

Thank You