

LAFAYETTE COLLEGE

MEMORANDUM FROM
THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

April 7, 1970.

The Faculty:

The enclosed materials relate to an informal meeting held in Pardee Hall on March 21, 1970 between members of the Board of Trustees and members of the Association of Black Collegians. Trustees, members of ABC, and administrative secretaries to Board Committees gathered as a group for opening remarks after which four small discussion groups were formed. The session concluded with a meeting of the full group.

Members of the Board had previously seen the complete text of the Black Manifesto which was issued in October.

The Black Manifesto is often referred to as the "Five Demands," but the document actually is arranged under 5 broad subject headings. Under each heading there is a set of statements which identify problems and indicate broad objectives to be sought. Under each heading specific programs are listed also.

The enclosed document attempts to indicate separately that material in the Manifesto which refers to general problems and broad objectives (herein called "Statements of Purpose") and that material in the Manifesto which offers specific proposals for action (herein called "Specific Programs"). Each section concludes with a "Comment" section which attempts to show what has been done, what is planned, or what further concerns various constituencies may have with respect to the programs proposed.

Every attempt was made to be as inclusive as possible with respect to the material found in the Black Manifesto, and the original language of the Manifesto was used wherever possible. Departure from the original language was made only when the format required it, and these changes were intended to be editorial only, leaving meaning unchanged.

A copy of the enclosed document was sent to the Trustees and to the members of the Association of Black Collegians in advance of the March 21 meeting. The enclosed document was prepared for informational purposes only and was not intended as a guide for the discussion on March 21.


Ronald P. Stenlake

enc.

Administrative Secretary to the Board of Trustees

1. More Black Students

Statement of Purpose as found in the Manifesto:

"The Black Man must be able to take a more effective and influential part in the communities in which he resides. In order to accomplish this, he must be equipped with the skills, knowledges, and capacities necessary for him to survive in this society."

Specific Programs found in the Manifesto:

(a)

More Black Students (number of additional students not specified).

Comment:

As of March 10, 1970, application forms had been received from 331 Black high school students, 206 men and 125 women. Approximately one-half of these applications are complete, that is, have seventh semester grades and Colleges Board scores. To date, 45 of these students have been accepted. Of these, 40 are aid applicants and, of the aid applicants, 18 have submitted Parents' Confidential Financial Statements and all 18 have been offered aid. It is estimated that we will probably accept, and offer to aid where needed, 70 to 85 Black students in order to enroll 25 to 30. We will reject those who clearly cannot qualify for Lafayette or any other of the Lehigh Valley colleges and offer to the others whom we cannot aid financially an opportunity for review of their credentials by other Lehigh Valley institutions, most of which are still seeking Black applicants.

Since the number of applications to Lafayette from Blacks, including those applications not complete, has risen to 331 from last year's high of 106, it may be useful to speculate on the reasons for this increase.

There is no question that there was greater effectiveness in recruiting on the part of our admissions staff aided by members of the Association of Black Collegians who have given most freely of their time in this enterprise. Coeducation has undoubtedly been a factor as has our Black recruitment brochure, "Rapped in Black." Finally, there appears to be a growing belief, which has accumulated over several years, that Lafayette is sincere in its desire to attract qualified Black students. In part, at least, the successes of this year may be attributed to recruiting efforts in the past.

(b)

Recruitment concentration should be placed upon urban areas, such as: New York City, Newark, Trenton, Philadelphia, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago and others:

Comment:

During this academic year recruitment efforts were concentrated for the most part, in those cities and areas from which Lafayette undergraduates have traditionally been drawn. School visits, college nights and/or agency sponsored college orientation programs for Black students were made or attended by members of the admissions staff or Black Lafayette upper-classmen in New York City, Newark (and elsewhere in North Jersey), Philadelphia, Harrisburg, Washington, D.C., Richmond, Norfolk and Atlanta. Somewhat in excess of four thousand contacts by mail were made in the above cities and elsewhere throughout the country.

(c)

Particular emphasis should be placed on enrolling Black students from so-called disadvantaged backgrounds:

Comment:

There was no specific emphasis placed on recruitment in hardcore ghetto situations although most of the cities mentioned above have such areas and high schools in them were visited.

The emphasis in admissions has been on the enrollment of a cross-section of Black students recognizing that many of these, if not most, will be coming from backgrounds which can be characterized as "disadvantaged" relative to the background of most white undergraduates at Lafayette. It is in this area that the College is faced with a dilemma which, at best, can only be resolved by a compromise. With approximately 22% (approximately \$40,000) of our freshman aid budget targeted for Black students, it is obvious that the greater the average need of each Black enrollee, the fewer Black students it is possible to matriculate in the freshman class. For this reason, the Admissions Committee has attempted to balance Black acceptances from truly disadvantaged backgrounds having very high financial needs with students whose need may be lower in order to enroll a maximum number of Black students.

(d)

Lafayette College should affiliate itself with the numerous programs and agencies that train and refer these Black students to different colleges.

Comment:

The College has established a working relationship with a number of agencies which seek out and identify possible Black applicants, and has been doing so since 1964. The agencies in cooperation this year are: The Commission on Race and Religion of the Pennsylvania Synod UPASA, the National Achievement Scholarship Program, National Scholarship Service and Fund for Negro Students, Project OPEN, Cooperative Program for Educational Opportunity, Princeton Cooperative School Program, Student Opportunity Scholarship Program, Philadelphia Committee for College Placement, several "Upward Bound" programs, Project Access.

(e)

Seek out Black students who reside in Easton and the Lehigh Valley.

Comment:

In the Lehigh Valley the Admissions Office has primarily concerned itself with the ProJeCt Center. Admission has been offered to several local Black students in recent years, but the tendency has been for them to go elsewhere. At least one Easton Black student will be in the Class of 1974.

(f)

Compensatory and remedial programs need to be established to raise their (disadvantaged Blacks') academic level to a point where they could effectively compete in the Lafayette academic environment.

Comment:

At its meeting of February 21, 1970, the Board of Trustees approved a proposal for the establishment of a Pre-enrollment Enrichment Program for the benefit of disadvantaged students. This program will be conducted in the summer of 1970 as and if needed.

(g)

Lighter and more flexible course loads should be considered, along with the freedom of finishing their (the disadvantaged Blacks') undergraduate program in a time span that is more suitable to their needs.

Comment:

The use of light academic loads, summer session work and tutoring continues for Black students as it has in the past for any student requiring it.

(h)

These students should be assigned sensitive and responsive advisors and counselors who would be able to aid them before and during their matriculation.

Comment:

Every effort is made to find sensitive and responsive advisors for all our students. With the introduction of a new summer freshman orientation program this year, there are greater opportunities for offering a more personalized and effective counseling program and advisor selection for all students. In addition, an Assistant was appointed in the Dean's Office in 1968 to counsel Black students.

(i)

We do not feel that any Black students should be graduated from this institution if he or she has not received a full and relevant education and met the requirements for graduation from Lafayette College.

Comment:

This policy applies to all students.

2. Black Studies Programs

Statement of Purpose as found in the Manifesto:

"The racism and prejudice of this country has been built on sheer ignorance and perpetuated by one-sided teaching of history, social sciences, literature, and all other areas of academic endeavor. A realistic education can correct much of this misrepresentation and omission of fact... There can no longer be exclusion of four-fifths of the world's population because they are not white. In order to eliminate much of the racism in this country, the educational system must show that there is more to the world than the United States and Western Europe."

Specific Programs found in the Manifesto:

(a)

Lafayette College should provide a truly significant education.

Comment:

In light of the pending curricular revision, and with regard to the more specific suggestions for curricular reform found later in the Manifesto, no comment to this question need be offered here other than to say that all Trustees, Faculty, and Administrators have this goal as their highest objective, although people may differ in their ideas on how to achieve this goal.

(b)

Expansion of the present curriculum to include studies of the Black Man's experience in all aspects and areas in order that knowledge of the true Black Man might erase this insipid ignorance. Specific courses needed on the African Heritage, the Black Man's literature, drama, poetry, history, music, art, and the problems facing him in this racist environment.

Comment:

Before the Manifesto was issued American Civilization 66 and 67 (The Black Man in American Civilization) had been introduced to deal with the Black experience. During the present academic year, the Faculty Curriculum Committee has studied our curriculum to see how the Black contribution and experience might be included more effectively in it. The Committee met with the Black students in order to get their ideas on curriculum change. The Provost sent a questionnaire to all department heads asking for detailed information on what was currently being done and what more might be done to incorporate materials on the Black experience in existing or new courses. The Curriculum Committee appointed a sub-committee to review the replies from department heads. The

Committee also met with Isaac Patterson, David Portlock, and Arthur Statum, the three Black members of the Lafayette staff, to get the benefit of their ideas on the subject.

The academic departments and the Curriculum Committee are examining possibilities for new courses specifically designed to recognize the justified concerns of our Black students. On the recommendation of the Departments of English and of Art and Music respectively, and of the Curriculum Committee, the faculty approved a course on Black Literature in America and a course on American folk music which will incorporate the Black contribution. The faculty also approved, upon the recommendation of the Department of Economics and of the Curriculum Committee, a new course in Urban Economics which will contain materials on the Black contribution and experience.

(c)

The entire Curriculum should be revised to eliminate the racism inherent in it.

Comment:

In addition to the preceding comments, it may be reported that during the extracurricular week in January approximately 35 faculty members attended a four day seminar on campus which was devoted to the subject of Black studies in the curriculum. Black scholars and administrators from other institutions met with our faculty members to consider the practical ways to respond in the curriculum to the concerns of our Black students.

Also, the Heads of Departments have met with Black students to get the benefit of their thinking of this point.

(c) --

continued - This applies in particular to the area of history. We no longer want to see Western Civilization presented as the only "civilization" in the modern world.

Comment:

The Department of History considered the ABC position and agreed that the basic history course taken by most students should not be limited to the Western Experience. The traditional course on Western Civilization therefore is being dropped and a new introductory course will be offered which will be related to the historical backgrounds of some current issues and concerns such as the impact of science and technology, urbanization, imperialism, racism, and the emergence of the Third World. The Department of History is also planning some seminars which would deal with the Black experience in the Western world.

3. More Black Faculty Members and Black Administrators

Statement of Purpose as found in the Manifesto:

"~~The~~ studying the past history of America, we as Black People have found that White America, on the whole, has denied our legitimate needs and aspirations. It must be realized that Black People know what they themselves need and want. What White America has given us in the past has not necessarily been for our benefit. . . . Exposure to black faculty members and black administrators would be a rewarding experience not just for black students but for administrators, faculty members, and the student body as well." With Black Faculty and Administrators the ABC demands could be put into operation and the Faculty and Administration could be more responsive to the needs of its Black students.

Specific Programs found in the Manifesto:

(a)

More Black Faculty Members and Black Administrators; Lafayette College should secure Black faculty members and Black administrators on a full-time basis.

Comment:

For some time we have sought to recruit qualified Blacks to fill vacancies on the faculty and administrative staff when they occurred. At our first meeting with department heads at the beginning of the year, all were urged to increase their efforts in this regard. The Provost has visited a number of university placement offices and has examined the files of the Cooperative College Registry in order to refer possible Black candidates to department heads. Department heads with vacancies to fill this year have attended professional meetings in order to seek out Black candidates. The Faculty Appointments and Promotions Committee has met with the three Black members of our staff to get the benefit of their ideas on the recruitment of Blacks. The department heads have met with our Black students to answer their questions and outline the practical difficulties involved in finding and recruiting qualified Black candidates. In several cases, the department heads and the Provost have been in contact with potential candidates some of whom have not been interested or have accepted positions elsewhere. In 1969, for example, we unsuccessfully offered an administrative position to three Blacks.

The problem of Black recruitment is especially difficult in view of the fact that less than 1 percent of the doctorates awarded in American universities are earned by Blacks and

only about 2 percent of the master's degrees are earned by Blacks, many in the fields of education. Although graduate preparation and advanced degrees are only one consideration in respect to the evaluation of a candidate's credentials, we cannot ignore competency and teaching ability in making appointments.

Several vacancies remain to be filled for next year and we are continuing to look for Black candidates to fill them. Discussions are now underway with a prospective Black faculty member. One Black member of our senior class has been offered the position of Assistant Director of Admissions after his graduation this June. It is hoped that another full time administrative position will be filled by a Black within the next few weeks.

(h)

Upgrade the present Black staff to full-time status

Comment:

One of our three Black staff members is presently full-time and a second will continue to serve part-time while pursuing graduate education under the assistance of the fellowship program at Lafayette.

(c)

Lafayette College could also consider sponsoring its own Black graduates through graduate school in return for them teaching for a few years.

Comment:

This is a suggestion that requires very special examination. A basic problem is that the proposal would grant scholarships to students at other institutions at the expense of decreasing scholarship funds available to Lafayette students. There is question of the actual need to do this since graduate schools are actively seeking Black students, and a Black Lafayette graduate should have no difficulty in finding financial assistance at the graduate level if he otherwise qualifies for graduate study. Secondly, it would be undesirable to force a graduate to return to the College should he later find out that returning to Lafayette was no longer of interest to him. Finally, the consideration of this proposal, for educational reasons, would have to include provision for all prospective teachers to gain expertise and be exposed to different patterns of higher education prior to returning to Lafayette.

4. A Black House

Statement of Purpose as found in the Manifesto:

"One of the primary reasons that has prevented black students from having a wholesome and socially rewarding experience at Lafayette College has been the absence of social and cultural outlets. The black student is plunged onto the Lafayette College campus, traditionally modeled on a lily-white world, and is left with no opportunity to stabilize his social being and identity. . . . A Black House would be a place for black students to socialize, fraternize and experience community. It would be a basis for unification and solidarity for black students. It would serve as a meeting place for both blacks and whites who wish to partake in meaningful dialogue of common concerns and issues."

Specific Programs as found in the Manifesto:

There should be provided a cultural center which would be a place for black students to socialize, fraternize and experience community. It would provide central location where all interested college students and faculty members could partake in seminar programs dealing with the black man's experience, history and culture. It would also provide the services to the community of Easton and particularly to the black youth of Easton and vicinity.

Comment:

At a meeting in May 1969 with members of the ABC at President Bergethon's home, a request was made for a Black House or black cultural center. Following the meeting the Dean's Office investigated several possibilities and recommended that the classroom in the northeast wing of Watson Hall be used. President Bergethon and the officers of the Board of Trustees approved the recommendation, and the classroom was designated as a Black Activities Lounge and was converted during the fall semester 1969. Since that time the room and adjoining office have been renovated for use by the ABC and appropriate furnishings have been purchased. The Black students have made extensive use of this facility as a meeting room and social area. The room has served as a location for seminars, guest speakers and as a repository and exhibit area for literature, music and other examples of black culture. The spring seminar series sponsored by the ABC is currently being held in the Black Activities Lounge.

Following the request in October for a Black House, the Faculty Committee on Student Affairs met in November with approximately ten representatives of the ABC, following which the Faculty Committee voted to go on record as favoring in prin-

ciple a larger facility than was presently available. Representatives of the ABC were asked to present a more detailed proposal for a Black House.

A proposal recently received from the ABC suggests the following optimum program: guest rooms with a capacity for four individuals, student rooms with a capacity of ten, small kitchen, rest rooms for men and women, two seminar rooms or lounge areas, one library-study room, a music listening room, and a room for conferences and parties.

The Faculty Committee on Student Affairs has named a sub-committee to meet with representatives of the ABC to discuss this proposal and to work in conjunction with the Office of Physical Planning and Operations in order to ascertain whether such a facility is available and the approximate costs if renovation and refurbishing would be required. The sub-committee hopes to meet with representatives of the ABC sometime during the week of March 16 and present its report to the Faculty Committee as soon as possible thereafter.

5. The End or Neutralization of the Effects of Racism on This Campus

Statement of Purpose as found in the Manifesto:

"All of our previous demands have been aimed at the Lafayette College Community collectively. This final demand is aimed at each individual of this community. Each individual must personally assume the responsibility of evaluating his own racism and neutralizing its effects on this campus. Then he should aid others in doing the same. This is one realistic approach to the end of racism. All of America must be able to recognize its racism and only then can we proceed to erase these extremely primitive attitudes and to solve the problems it presents.

"If the end of racism cannot be achieved, its effects can be neutralized by the institution of the above demands. The main concept of racism essentially revolves around the ideas of inferiority and superiority, a body or ethnic group projecting the idea of inferiority on a specific group and the idea of superiority on themselves. The inferiority-superiority concept feeds on ignorance. Ignorance supposedly may be obliterated by education, which is achieved by exposure. The institution of our demands will, in effect, expose the Lafayette Community to the black culture and its achievements, thereby educating the college community. This education will ultimately remove the idea of inferiority applied to the oppressed and hopefully remove the idea of superiority applied to the oppressors. By removing the idea of inferiority from the oppressed even without the removal of the idea of superiority from the oppressor, it is possible to neutralize the effects of racism involving the former group. The oppressed will now realize that they too have a great cultural heritage, profound history and a significant role in the society of which they are a part."

Specific programs found in the Manifesto:

The End or Neutralization of the Effects of Racism on this Campus.

Comment:

As the Manifesto points out, this matter is addressed more to individuals than to the College as an institution. Institutionally the College has forbidden discrimination in social living groups on the basis of race and otherwise forbids racial discrimination in those kinds of activities which can be regulated by the College. But (as suggested in the Manifesto) the College as institution can be most effective in this area by working to meet the kinds of issues raised in the first four points in the Manifesto.