

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY  
EVANSTON, ILLINOIS 60201

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS  
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May 16, 1968

TO: Faculty and Staff  
FROM: Department of Public Relations

Enclosed are two documents for your information. One is the resolution adopted unanimously by the Board of Trustees of Northwestern University at its meeting of May 14, 1968. The other is the statement released by University President J. Roscoe Miller following the issuance of the Board's resolution.

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY  
EVANSTON—CHICAGO

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
EVANSTON, ILLINOIS

STATEMENT OF DR. J. ROSCOE MILLER

I am deeply grateful to the members of the Board of Trustees of this University for upholding the decisions made by the administration in the events of May 3-4. Their approval enables Northwestern to go forward with programs of the utmost concern to the future of this country. Our work will succeed because we have been through these difficult days together--trustees, administrators, faculty and students--and have proved that the fruits of forbearance are understanding and strength.

In any crisis charged with intense feeling, the actual events tend to become obscured. For those who know of the recent incidents on campus only through reports in the press and on television, I should like to review in sequence what actually happened:

1. At 7:45 on Friday morning, May 3, a group of black students occupied the Business Office of the University at 619 Clark Street in Evanston.
2. The University administration and the Evanston Police, within an hour or two after word of the student seizure of the Business Office, were fully prepared to eject the students by use of such force as might be necessary, if that course should seem wisest.

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3. The trespassers were identified as Northwestern students who had previously petitioned the University for redress of various grievances. University officials found that there had been a substantial failure of real communication between these students and the administration.

4. The grievances of the students were real and deserved relief. They arose from the very severe difficulties that many black students were having in living in a new and generally white community.

5. Recognizing a real dilemma between the illegal trespass committed by sincere but misguided students and the moral problem of using force where the University officials had, in this case, failed to understand the depth of the problems presented by prior petitions, University officials elected to attempt a resolution by negotiations.

6. Far from the complete capitulation to the demands of the students that has been charged in some quarters, the University refused to grant many of the demands. All demands that the University surrender administrative authority or responsibility to the students were rejected. All demands for pre-emption of faculty prerogatives were denied. The requests that were granted were such as should result in adequate communication between the black students, the faculty and the administration in a manner in keeping with the general administrative concepts of the University. The main areas of agreement result in the establishment of an advisory committee, a human relations committee, and formalized arrangements for consultation in the recruitment of black students and financial aid.

7. Upon reaching this agreement with the students, the Business Office was vacated without loss or damage on Saturday evening, May 4. Classes resumed without incident on Monday, May 6.

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BOARD OF TRUSTEES

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of Northwestern University has received full reports from the officers of the University as to the incidents of May 3 and 4 on the University campus, including the occupancy of the University Business Office, the negotiations between the occupying group and the administration and the resulting agreement; and

WHEREAS, negotiation of contracts including arrangements with student groups, is a delegated function of administrative officers under the by-laws of the University, but is subject to the supervisory responsibility of the Board of Trustees in matters of policy; and

WHEREAS the agreement of May 4 has given rise to great misunderstanding; therefore,

The Board of Trustees RESOLVES:

1. The Board concurs in the administration's sincere effort to understand the problems of the black student group and to seek a satisfactory program for resolving them. The Board therefore authorizes the administration to proceed with the terms of the agreement of May 4, subject to review from time to time by the Board of Trustees. The Board is satisfied that the administration properly rejected all demands that the University surrender administrative authority or faculty prerogative, and that under the terms of the agreement, students will be consulted in an advisory capacity only.

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The provisions of the agreement with respect to separate housing of black students have been the subject of considerable adverse comment. While as a matter of policy the Board favors integration of University housing units and is opposed to "separatism" or "segregation," we feel that the black students, whether right or wrong in their judgment, were nevertheless sincere in their belief that separate housing, on the basis of individual choice, was desirable in view of the special problems confronting them. On this basis, we approve of the administration's response to their request.

2. The preamble of the agreement of May 4, insofar as it is interpreted to impute to the University hostile and antagonistic "racism," is wholly unacceptable to the Board. In fact, the Board decries racism in any form. It is proud that Northwestern University is in the forefront of those educational institutions which offer educational opportunity for all qualified applicants, without discrimination on the basis of race, creed or color.

3. The Board deplores the unlawful action of the students in occupying the Business Office. The Board does not subscribe to the philosophy that adherence to a cause justifies unlawful action and the consequent infringement of rights and curtailment of freedom of others. In order that there be no misunderstanding, negotiations will not again be conducted by the University while unlawful or disruptive activity is in progress. The University will take whatever action is necessary to terminate unlawful activities.

4. The Board expresses complete confidence in the administrative officers of the University and directs them to take prompt and effective

action in case of any future attempt to engage in tactics which disrupt the orderly conduct of the University. To this end the Board formally adopts the following statement as the policy of the University:

"Northwestern University stands for freedom of speech, freedom of inquiry, freedom of dissent and freedom to demonstrate in peaceful fashion. The University recognizes that freedom requires order, discipline, and responsibility, and stands for the right of all faculty and students to pursue their legitimate goals without interference. This University, therefore, will not tolerate any attempt by any individual, group or organization to disrupt the regularly scheduled activities of the University. Any such effort to impede the holding of classes, the carrying forward of the University's business or the arrangements for properly authorized and scheduled events, would constitute an invasion of the rights of faculty and students and cannot be permitted. If any such attempt is made to interfere with any University activity, the leaders and participants engaged in disruptive tactics will be held responsible and will be subject to appropriate legal and disciplinary action, including expulsion.

It is further resolved, that copies of this Resolution be made known to the University community and to the public.

DATED, this 14th day of May, 1968.