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BARNARD COLLEGE

The Ten Demands

*Proposals presented to
President Peterson by the Barnard
Organization of Soul Sisters
on February 24.*

Where there is a need to act and the individual fails to act, then the individual is responsible for the consequences that flow herefrom. We, the black students, believe that the educational structure at Barnard supports the status quo. We recognize the need for change. The demands which we are presenting are an earnest effort by the black students of Barnard College to initiate that change.

We feel that in the past the Barnard College administration has exhibited a lack of sensitivity and a lack of understanding concerning the problems of black students. Therefore, we demand that the Barnard Organization of Soul Sisters have the sole power to institute the following changes including the hiring of personnel and selection of committees and committee members. It is understood that all of the following programs will be funded in total by Barnard College.

We seek and expect a relevant education.

We seek and expect a relevant education which we are not getting and which we are not alone in realizing the need for. White students have also felt the alienation. In a first step toward the establishment of a "more meaningful education" the black students at Barnard propose the foundation of an inter-departmental major in Afro-American studies. This major is to be fashioned after the Urban Studies major already proposed, but will call for the addition of several new courses in nearly all of the departments. A committee of faculty members, i.e., the chairmen of the departments, and students should be immediately established to implement this. It is taken for granted that black students chosen by the black community at Barnard will serve both as advisors in planning the curriculum and as members of the committee which renders the final decision. We do not recognize any parallel committee, and demand the immediate dissolution of the committee established by the administration.

We feel a need to undertake a nationwide recruitment program wherein more black students will be admitted to the college. We feel that Barnard's black enrollment must be increased. We feel that such an increase should come through a nationwide recruitment program sponsored financially by the college in which presently enrolled blacks will educate prospective black applicants as to the relevance of an education at Barnard. The relationship between recruiter and applicant will thereby be a more intimate one, with the applicant being thoroughly informed of the true policies of Barnard College.

We demand that the policies of the financial aid office be made more flexible, taking into consideration the special needs of the black students.

We do not feel that we should have to deal with the present financial aid office which continuously fails to recognize our individual needs and prefers to dictate to us what we ought to need. Most black students at Barnard depend on financial aid and have the right to know on exactly what terms and by what criterion financial aid is given. We feel that the unrealistic policies of financial aid need to be revamped.

We want periodicals, books, and records relevant to our black culture in the Library.

The Black Women of Barnard College demand periodicals, books, and records which are relevant to black culture to be placed in Lehman Library as a necessity for making the educational structure of this college relevant to the black student, and for educating the uninformed non-black Barnard student body.

We demand an orientation program designed for and administered by black students.

The establishment of such a program is essential to entering black freshmen for a smooth transition into college life in general, and into the often-times tense and alienating environment in which we find ourselves. We contend that such a program can only be meaningful and truly successful if directed and carried out in its entirety by black students who have had the experience of living in a predominantly white institution in New York City. We feel that it is our duty as black students to assist each black student in obtaining a meaningful and complete education of what the city can offer us, and what adjustments must (and those that need not) be made for a fruitful experience here.

We demand the total reconstruction of the "Special Student Program."

We feel that the Special Student Program should meet the specific and individual needs of those students who have been saddled with the burdensome label of "Special Students." This reconstruction must involve organized programs geared toward the cultural, academic, and financial needs of the students.

We want immediate lounge and office facilities in BHR and Plimpton until we can move into permanently designated rooms in the Student Union Building [the McIntosh Student Center].

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As black students we feel the need of a central location from which we can work. Having a culture separate from that of the non-black student body we feel that such an area would provide an outlet from strains imposed by our existence in the white structure at Barnard.

We want selective living for black students at Barnard.

It is a strain—academically, socially, and therefore psychologically for us, black women, to live apart from one another in the dormitories. We have no desire to assimilate into the white society at Barnard. We want sections of BHR, Plimpton, and 616-620 to be designated "for blacks only" so that we may have the option of living instead of merely existing.

We demand Soul Food in the cafeteria.

As students from a significantly different background (culturally and socio-economically) we feel entitled to be served dishes con-

sistent with our background, i.e., Soul Food. Because we pay for the food we eat, we'd like to be served some familiar foods. If certain other minority groups can have fish on the line to supplement their diets because of religious beliefs, we feel that black students can also have some Soul Food. Presently, the food service is biased and discriminatory.

We want an immediate end to harassment by campus security.
There have been many instances in which the black students at Barnard have been unnecessarily asked to produce Barnard identification. We feel that such practices are discriminatory and we will not tolerate them.

We demand a response from President Peterson and the Board of Trustees by March 3, 1969 and further demand that President Peterson speak directly to these demands in an open meeting on March 3, 1969.



Students waiting for the convocation to begin, March 3.