

4/16/70

STUDENT RESPONSE TO PRES. RANTOUL'S STATEMENT REGARDING THE DEMANDS FOR MORE FINANCIAL AID:

We, the 26 original signers of the petition for \$500,000.00 for financial aid at R.I.S.D. have received the administration's response to our demands and wish to make public our reaction to the 500 students and faculty who supported our demands.

Demand I -- Only \$191,152 of the \$400,000 referred to by President Rantoul is designated for scholarship grants. The remainder includes loans from the federal government and the school and work study grants. We do not consider this amount to be the ultimate in student aid. It is relatively simple for the administration to say that plans are under way to increase financial aid, but judging by what has been done in past years, this attitude of "we're working on it" is hardly acceptable or believable.

Demand A -- The figures which were presented to the student body to substantiate the tuition increase of \$200 for the school year 1970-71 show no proportionate increase in scholarship aid. Even with this small increase, students currently on financial aid will still have to pay the school more money next year than they did this year.

Demand B -- The 114 Rhode Island students referred to by Pres. Rantoul actually include out-of-state students who have taken up residence in R.I. since their admission to R.I.S.D. We want 30 full scholarships for people currently attending high school in R.I., thereby eliminating the present disregard for assistance to local applicants.

Loans as a means of financial aid are insufficient since they are only a postponement of debt. The administration must live up to its responsibility of meeting student needs. As it stands, the cash scholarship that are given to freshmen and sophomores become a lure for investing two years in R.I.S.D. When this cash is cut off in the junior and senior year, the crisis occurs of deciding whether or not to go into debt by taking out a federal or school loan, or instead, to transfer to another school which will supply financial aid. In most cases, students tend to jump into super-debt rather than to start anew at another college because of the time element involved (4 year student deferments.)

To expect a slide portfolio from a low income student is absurd and serves only to rule out the possibility of their acceptance.

Demand C -- Since both students and the administration agree upon the need for an emergency fund, our question is what step other than inter-office memos are being taken to secure the establishment of this fund. A reallocation of present funds to meet such emergencies will only result in more cutbacks from existing scholarships. Pres. Rantoul readily admits that there are gross injustices within the present scholarship system; yet, he proposes no concrete plan for change.

Demand II -- Since the administration defines rising costs as the reason behind tuition increases, this being a direct result of U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia, we ask that it join us in support of the current referendum to withdraw all troops from Asia. This would then make available the cash which the administration feels is lost to the war.

Demand III -- The information pertaining to scholarship aid which is printed in the RISD catalogue is insufficient since it does not include specific or even estimated figures of scholarship funds, nor what chances students have of receiving financial aid. We also feel that incoming students should be warned that under present policy scholarship cutbacks in the second, third, and fourth years are, in most cases, inevitable. This warning would at least give incoming students a chance to consider the perils of going into heavy debt before they commit themselves.

Re: Pres. Rantoul's statement regarding the number of applicants for financial aid -- The fact that 27.6% of the student body applied for financial aid is not impressive until the number of students who need and receive aid is made public. Most people feel that they need more money, and 27.6% is not a particularly significant figure. It does mean that over two-thirds of the student body do not need money, but it does not mean that the others come from lower-middle to lower class backgrounds.

SUPPORT OF THE DEMANDS OF THE MINORITY STUDENTS:

We, the concerned students who initiated the \$500,000 scholarship petition stand in support of the petition now being circulated by the minority students. The R.I.S.D. administration has refused to recognize the special needs of minority students, and we feel it is our responsibility to support the continuation of their demands. We feel that both sets of demands seek to improve the R.I.S.D. community. For the sake of mutual support in achieving our goals, we ask you to stand with us in supporting the petition of the minority students.

There will be a meeting on Thursday,
April 16th, at 4:00 p.m. in Memorial Hall.
Everyone who signed the petition supporting
the demands and anyone else interested in
student response to the administration's
rejection is urged to come.

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PLAN FOR A POSSIBLE STUDENT ADMINISTRATION NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT

Design a Student-Faculty Senate with representatives from each department in both categories. Give them the assignment to come up with ten or twenty innovative and creative ideas for art and design education.

Ask the President when he speaks to groups, to spend as much time talking about those new ideas as he does about money.

Ask the Trustees to grant some "now" money for scholarship endowment and that eleven to fifteen of these scholarships go to Rhode Island residents that have gone to the high schools in Rhode Island, and eight to twelve to go to American Indian students from all over the country, and the rest be granted to presently enrolled students.

That the students be charged with the responsibility to raise a \$10,000 emergency fund through fund raising programs that they design. Or by directing the SAO to establish emergency funds to be administered by the students and the faculty for students who have to leave the school because of financial difficulties.

Establishment of a fund of \$7,000 for grants of \$50 each for materials for special projects for students who are financially unable to experiment in unusual projects or materials.

Start a plan for summer session for high school students who have completed their junior year. This summer session should be for 200 students, at a fee of \$450.00 each, for six or eight weeks. From this group

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of 200, pick 50% of the freshman class for the following year. Take the profit which should be about \$50,000 and plug it into scholarships.

Start the planning for an Antioch plan to enable the School to go on a plan that makes summer a fully accredited semester, so that students can work part of the year and go to school for part of the year, without loss of their draft status. This plan also allows students to graduate earlier, so that they can be earning sooner. By using the School plant for twelve months of the year, instead of the present nine, there should be some operational benefits to the School. If it is a large dollar amount, it should be plugged into scholarships.

Start the planning to accredit the evening school, so that people can both work and go to school. The evening school admission should include the acceptances of high risk students who could be picked out and then matriculated to the day school.

Announce a period of stringency where funds which are saved will be transferred to the school scholarship fund.

Apply to Commissioner Bruce of the Bureau of Indian Affairs for a contract to educate American Indians, where the Bureau agrees to fund tribal students at a rate of \$1,000 per year.

Ask the students to man a talent search and development program in Rhode Island and place these students in art schools all over the country. Have the students set a goal for thirty Rhode Island youngsters placed each year.

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Ask the parents of students to contribute \$10 per year to a scholarship tax. Ask the same of the faculty and the administration.

College Work-Study should be taken from Gordon Allen alone, not because Mr. Allen is not doing a good job with a difficult task, but because that is too hot a seat for one man to sit in alone. We have an admissions committee and a financial aid committee for that very reason. This should then be placed in the hands of the students, faculty, Dean of Students, and Mr. Allen.

That we announce the departure of Mr. Miller, for a more aggressive and productive development officer.

That we invite the top people in the Museum to be on a panel to make their position clear to a public gathering that is made up of mostly students. The Museum is terribly vulnerable, and antagonisms between students, faculty and the Museum is against the best interests of the Museum and the Rhode Island School of Design community as a whole.