

State University of New York / College at Old Westbury

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M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Faculty Senate
FROM: Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate
DATE: March 2, 1993
RE: Attached resolution

3/2/93

The attached resolution was submitted in time for consideration by the Senate at its March 5th meeting but, as a result of an error, was excluded from the agenda. It will be considered as item 4b.

The Executive Committee of the Senate wishes to assure faculty that it will not screen resolutions and that all resolutions submitted will be placed on the Senate agenda. By the same token, inclusion of resolutions on the agenda does not imply that they have been endorsed by the Executive Committee.

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Attachment

II

Rationale

The events of the last few days have only deepened our concern about the Administration's ability to manage the affairs of the College. Specifically:

- 1) On Monday, February 22, while the students were rallying in an effort to persuade President Pettigrew to meet with them, she stayed in her home. For much of Tuesday, February 23, the entire senior administration was absent from their offices and from the areas where demonstrations took place. On Tuesday morning, the entire senior staff was gathered at the President's home, invoking as a reason not to negotiate the fear of student violence, which if it had actually occurred, would have rendered their presence essential. In fact, it required the intervention of the University Senator and the Chair of the Faculty Senate to negotiate a meeting of the President with her students. Vice-Provost Burke had to contact the Chair of the Faculty Senate in his efforts to find ways to persuade students to leave the Library.
- 2) Dr. Pettigrew has suggested to the press (Newsday, February 25) that she reached a negotiated agreement with appropriate faculty committees under the terms of which the faculty agreed to an "expanded" proposal to accommodate non-African-American music, (something that she had requested all along) in return for which she would reinstate the performing arts faculty and staff. In fact, as the administration knows, the proposal being finalized is essentially the same as she has opposed during the last several years.
- 3) It is only with the press that Dr. Pettigrew refers to budgetary cuts as a reason for the original retrenchment. In fact she retrenched individuals, but did not give up faculty lines. The cuts are not reflected in the 1993-94 budget, and in internal arenas, the reasons Dr. Pettigrew has given for the retrenchment have been other than budgetary.
- 4) To the press Dr. Pettigrew "questioned the assertion by students and professors that Old Westbury had a special multicultural mission" and went on to express the view that "the College's focus should be to provide a liberal arts education" (New York Times, February 24). The implication that multiculturalism is inconsistent with "a liberal arts education" is utterly at odds with the deeply rooted academic traditions of the College. If her views on the mission of Old Westbury have been misrepresented by the press, then the public record should be corrected by her, with alacrity. However, if her concept of the mission is represented substantially correctly, had this been known at the time, her candidacy for the Presidency of the College would have been in serious jeopardy.

Resolution

Therefore be it resolved that the Faculty Senate of the College at Old Westbury censure Dr. Pettigrew for negligence in her administrative duties at a time of crisis, for abdication of her leadership responsibilities and for misuse of the press for self-serving purposes at the expense of the truth.

Further, be it resolved that the Faculty Senate reaffirm and maintain the vote of no-confidence passed by the Faculty on February 19.