

Citation Label

Comparative Ethnic Studies Archives, UC Berkeley

Archive Call Number: CES ARC _____

Box No. 1 Folder No. 4 Date 4/10

Berkeley Division
Academic Senate
March 4, 1969
Roger W. Heyns

Someone new to this campus who tried to understand our current problems by reading and listening to everything available might well ask of us "if the Chancellor is in favor of ethnic studies, the students want ethnic studies, and the faculty seems favorably disposed to ethnic studies, why is there a dispute about it?" I'm sure that same thought has occurred to persons who are not new to the campus. It has been suggested that this is probably just a problem in communications.

I wish that were the case, but it is not.. The delay in moving on an ethnic studies department has not been due to disagreement about the need for change; nor has it been due to a lack of responsiveness by the Senate or the administration to the academic needs of minority students. There have been important issues of principle involved, and I am hopeful that we can now stand united on these principles. That is why from the beginning of this "Third World College" controversy I have repeatedly tried to get the matter converted from a slogan or simple statement to a detailed substantive proposal. Once all the issues are clearly identified, then we can deal with the principles involved, and, hopefully, this campus can make some solid progress.

You will recall I told the Senate on February 3rd, I thought we could best proceed with the ethnic studies concept by getting a proposal from a committee of concerned faculty and students. I could not get a committee organized with a mandate agreeable to all, unless I agreed to compromise Senate review or my own judgment. Therefore, I have not appointed a committee. A group

of faculty members has been working on a proposal and students were hoping to bring it to my office last Thursday. Actually the proposal was not completed until Friday, although someone did deliver two chunks of concrete to my office instead. There is now a proposal in circulation and hopefully it will be made available soon for Senate and administrative review. Withholding it simply delays action.

My efforts to proceed with an ethnic studies unit have benefitted very much from the strong support I have received from this Senate, and I am pleased that there are new efforts now to solidify that support behind approaches I have been exploring. I know from conversations with many of you, including the chairmen of your committees most relevant to the discussion, that it is assumed that given the history, by-laws, and role of this Senate and the administration, as well as your specific actions at our last regular meeting, any general statement of support this Senate adopts presupposes commitment to certain Senate and administrative principles and campus policies. I am sure that is the case but I believe it important to state them clearly so that any general statement adopted by the Senate is consistent with these propositions. These are the principles I have been following in my discussions:

1. Any unit created must not be segregated as to faculty or students.
2. Whatever unit is created to serve the needs of minorities, whether a department for the needs of one group or of several, should have no more autonomy and no less than any existing unit. Explicitly this means that the new unit would have the same relationship to the standing committees of the

Senate, particularly the Committee on Courses, Budget Committee, and the Committee on Academic Planning, and the administration, as any other unit.

3. Primary responsibility for initiating curriculum and personnel actions must rest with the faculty appointed to the units, and would be subject to reviews of the appropriate Senate Committees and administration.


4. The admissions policy of the new unit must be consistent with overall University policy and campus admissions policy. There can be no admissions policy or procedure separate from that of the campus as a whole. Again, the unit would, like other units, have to live within the general restrictions upon us all.

5. The administrative leadership of the unit would be selected by following the same procedures that are well established with existing units. I cannot delegate or abandon my responsibility for making the choice. This faculty knows that this means taking seriously recommendations of the faculty involved and using as one criterion the necessity that the person to be appointed have sufficient acceptance so that he can work effectively with those whom he must lead.

These principles are applicable to any unit whether in an existing college or in an independent unit that would report directly to me.

In asserting these principles and those to follow, I want once again to emphasize what I have said before: These principles will not inhibit in any way our ability to meet the academic needs of minority students--whether they be advanced or remedial. But these principles do require that educational programs be formulated on educational grounds, and that we not establish a unit for community action. When the campus was still considering a Department of

Afro-American Studies, I stated that I supported the idea that a majority of the implementing committee should be Black scholars who have worked in the field. I would apply the same principle in implementing the proposed Department of Ethnic Studies. In insisting on the relationship to the Senate and its committees, I want to make clear that I do not perceive these agencies as straight jackets or insensitive to the special needs of the proposed unit. I have found these committees to be fully responsive to the special requirements of the various schools and colleges.



And now a word about student participation in the proposed unit. I have found in these discussions that this is a crucial matter to some. I have indicated to the Division that I believe the unit should decide itself upon the form that student participation should take. Where the issue involved a committee that I would appoint, I have insisted that I be given a panel of names and allowed to make my own choice. I would also insist, as I indicated earlier, that initiating authority about personnel and courses would have to be left with the faculty. This is not to say that student advice would not be valuable or should not be sought.

This faculty has had before it the question of student participation in academic affairs on many occasions and you will recall that I have argued for increased student participation. But I do not believe that the basic issues of full student participation in personnel and curricular matters should be resolved or compromised by the decisions made in connection with programs for ethnic minorities. I believe this body should give more serious attention to this matter than it has received and the issues of student participation, whether minority or not, should not be resolved without that serious study.

Two other issues must be brought to your attention. A good deal of rhetoric has been devoted to the proposition that the new unit should have participation of the external community in its management. Let me state emphatically that I oppose this as much for the proposed department as for law, architecture or forestry, or any other unit. While all our schools and colleges should have effective relationships with the public they serve, at no point should the unit invite or permit external participation in control. Advice yes, participation in control, no.

I have the same protective view about the proposition that the unit should engage in community service. I assume this does not mean service which is us

6.
in the teaching and learning process as in field work or internships -- to which there can be no objections. But I am very wary of any unit of the University becoming an instrument of community action.

If the academic community chooses to use the University or any part of it as a base of political action, if it tries to identify the University with its causes, and mobilize the prestige and the resources of the University to goals which it chooses, then it has made the University an important piece of political real estate. And it will follow, inevitably, that others, outside the University, will then regard its control and management as important for goals which they select.

I think this campus has learned that programs of public service are best conducted through University Extension, and institutes, including the anticipated Institute of Race and Community Relations, rather than academic departments.

For many of the persons interested in ethnic studies, and, indeed, for many involved in the strike, these requirements I have just presented pose no problem, but that does not mean that it will be easy to create the department or end the turmoil. The fact is that there are persons in leadership positions in the strike who will not end it on any terms this campus could accept.

I sense there is growing support for the idea of an independent department reporting directly to the Chancellor. Parenthetically, let me say that I am pleased, flattered and a little bemused at the suggestion that I am more flexible and permissive than the rest of the University -- a view not loudly proclaimed from campus quarters. But be that as it may, I am not as concerned about where the unit is located as I am that we all be clear about what freedom and flexibility is required and what controls will be needed and expected. As you will learn from the Chairman of the Policy

7.

Committee, the relevant committees have agreed that the concept of an independent department is a valid way to approach the matter, and I am in agreement. The committees and the administration can, with concerned faculty members, work on the need for flexibility as well as control.

I hope I have assured you that I have every intention of helping to create an ethnic studies unit along the lines I just stated. Let me repeat my major motives for this determination: I believe there are genuine educational objectives that can be met by such a unit. And I believe it is important that this community indicate its respect and confidence in these groups and our colleagues on the faculty from these groups -- indicating to them our belief that they can and will develop a program that will be a source of pride to us all.

So far no one has talked explicitly about financial matters. But I think this faculty knows about our budgetary limitations and the fact that the prospects for the academic year 1969-70 are not good. This means, as a practical matter, that although other funds would be sought, basic support funds and FTE for any new units created will come primarily from our existing resources, through the process of reallocation. This too calls for the most careful examination of the proposals presented. It is not enough merely to indicate our good wishes, intentions and support; faculty members and the units from which they come must be prepared to give up some of their present allocations. The fact of fixed campus size alone requires these reallocations of space, college and department enrollments, and support.

Finally, a few words about the strike. I think this campus now understands that this campus has been the target of acts which are basic assaults on the idea of a university, and the values we all hold. Most recently packs of vandals have

roamed about the campus destroying property. Last night alone, they spray painted strike slogans on 11 campus buildings. Every chair in room 100 Lewis was smeared with glue. In the 41 days since the strike was called, there have been 13 arson attempts and unexplained fires as well as 20 bomb attempts. In the 41 days before the strike was called, there were no arson attempts, no fire bombs. Strike supporters have, in the name of self-determination, assaulted students who have decided to go to class; and in the name of education, they have attacked the library. As you can expect, unless there is an immediate end to the disruption and vandalism, many more students will be charged with rule violation and subject to serious University discipline, including dismissal. Many will be in any case for acts already committed. By now it should be abundantly clear the strike is counter-productive; that it is doing serious and increasingly permanent harm to this campus and its future. Each of us must do what he can to end it.