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[Memo from Esther Raushenbush to the Westlands Students, March 14, 1969]

Esther Raushenbush
Sarah Lawrence College

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March 14, 1969

To: The Westlands Students
From: Esther Raushenbush

You have asked in your statement for an "explicit commitment to implement (your) specific demand that at least one-third of the admitted students be from the working class".

In our conversation you asked about my personal commitment to diversity, and I replied that I am fully committed to it, and to the effort to bring it about. I expect to use all the resources I have and can reach to find funds for able students from the working class of all ethnic groups for whom an education at this college, with the changes in curriculum now being planned, will be a good education. I do believe that a Sarah Lawrence with a racially and economically diversified body of students with potential will be more effective than one with a racially and economically homogeneous student body. I will work to bring this about, and to strengthen the commitment of others connected with the College to it as well.

I would not be honest with you if I said that I can make a commitment to "implement this specific demand fully and without delay" if you mean that it should be achieved by next September. I believe that is not possible. I am willing to make a commitment to move as far toward that goal as possible with all the resources I have.

The energy and commitment you bring to this search for diversity should be used in the service of creating diversity. As a group you can do a great deal, outside of Westlands, as a catalyst that will move others toward this goal. I can only repeat that the goal of diversity you are seeking I wish to seek too, and will bring to the effort everything I can. I would hope you could find it possible to trust this purpose.