

3-15-1969

# [Statement from students to the Board of Trustees and the Administration, March 15, 1969]

Unknown

*Sarah Lawrence College*

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To: The Board of Trustees and the Administration

We the undersigned students and faculty, wish to inform the Board of Trustees and the Administration that we completely deplore any action, taken by any group, which disrupts the educational processes of this College. We respect the rights of anyone to express his views, but what has resulted now is the tyranny of the minority. We believe that there is absolutely no justification for the Westlands strike or for the other group's boycott of classes. Not only do we deplore their methods but we strongly disapprove of the tone of their statements.

We are against a fundamental restructuring of the College in the direction they demand. We believe that this restructuring would lead to a lowering of standards, a lack of intellectual discipline, and an atmosphere which would not be conducive to a genuine educational orientation. We believe that necessary changes can be made without the radical undermining of educational emphasis, and that any change must be made in the direction of strengthening existing standards.

We believe that the College exists for those students who desire education, not for those who will use any means to interfere with it. We believe that the students whose interests lie in the direction of social reform have ample opportunity to act on these interests, either within the existing structure, or in other contexts, if social reform and not anarchy is what they desire.

We subscribe to the philosophy that an individual must know himself before attempting to lead a crusade; we believe that a thorough education plays a major part in the acquiring of this self-knowledge. In fact, we can gain in self-knowledge by recognizing the flexibility of the existing system. We feel that any reconstruction in the direction of currently suggested plans would be antagonistic to the Sarah Lawrence vision of education.

We stand for individuality, and not for collectivism. We believe that the individual must explore his own potentialities and possibilities, discover his own direction, before he tries to determine the direction that others should take. We believe that a student should not be forced to cope with a situation he does not, cannot, understand fully. We believe that opinions must be grounded in knowledge, and conclusions in facts. It is the role of Sarah Lawrence as a small liberal arts college to provide an atmosphere in which the student can discover his own goals; the College must not force the individual to accept goals he does not think valid.

If Sarah Lawrence changes in the direction of the Radical proposals, it will cast off this role; it will lose its identity and its freedom. We believe that the values on which the school was founded, the values that determine its identity, are still valid today.

Respectfully,

approximately 50 signatures