

September 18, 1962

*Discrimination*

Memorandum for the Emerald

1. On January 24, 1961, the Board of Higher Education of the State of Oregon passed a resolution stating that:

"The Board, recognizing that gratifying progress has been made during the past two years toward the elimination of racial and religious restrictions from the national charters of fraternities and sororities having chapters at the University of Oregon and Oregon State College, believes that in view of this progress it should be possible to secure the elimination of the few remaining such restrictions within the coming two years. Therefore, the Board now directs that after January 1, 1963, the University and Oregon State College shall withdraw recognition of any fraternity or sorority whose national charter then requires local chapters to restrict their membership on the basis of race or religion."

2. We have taken and are continuing to take steps designed to make sure that all groups now on our campus either are or will be in compliance with this action by January 1, 1963.
3. At the Convocation for the Class of 1966 on September 16, 1962, I made the following statement:

"When a few years ago the Board of Higher Education said it would not be possible for groups to continue functioning on our campus which carry a discriminatory clause in their constitutions, it was in effect saying that such clauses were in conflict with the concept of the dignity and worth of each human being -- a concept that should be at the center of every community of scholars.

"Some may say now that we are about to achieve the objective set forth by the Board of Higher Education, 'That is good enough.'

"The University of Oregon rejects that point of view; we will never be satisfied until by their deeds our living groups demonstrate that there is no discrimination based on race, color, nationality or creed.

"Unless they do demonstrate it, they are standing in the way of this University's achieving its highest potential."

I know that there are many of our students who support whole heartedly this concept and I want them to know that they can count on any support it is possible for me to give them.

4. The action taken by the Board of Higher Education was designed to make sure that the local chapters of fraternities and sororities on the campus of the University of Oregon have complete freedom to invite persons to become members of their groups without regard to race, color, nationality, or creed.

It is clear that if, following the effective date of the Board's action, national organizations or groups of alumni utilize any other methods which result in restricting the freedom to select members without regard to race, color, nationality or creed, they will be in conflict with the basic policy and action will be taken looking toward the withdrawal of recognition.

5. I urge that, consistent with the concept of the dignity and worth of each human being, the living groups on the University of Oregon campus consider persons for membership solely on their merits and without regard to their race, color, nationality, or creed. Groups that act in this manner will have the complete support of the University if they are subjected to any pressure from the outside to follow a contrary policy.

Arthur S. Flemming  
President