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WE HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS BY

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ENTITLED THE ILLINI UNION SIT-IN OF SEPTEMBER 9-10, 1968

AND WHY IT HAPPENED

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THE ILLINI UNION SIT-IN OF SEPTEMBER 9-10, 1968
AND WHY IT HAPPENED

BY

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A.B. Dartmouth College, 1964

THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts in Education
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University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1975

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The topic of this study is a controversial one, one still capable of aggravating unhealed wounds. For many people closely connected with the beginning of the Special Educational Opportunities Program, recalling the events in the Illini Union in September 1968 is indeed painful. Special thanks, therefore, must be extended to the group of administrators who agreed to be interviewed and, in some cases, to relive moments they would prefer to forget.

In spite of the much appreciated cooperation of the interviewees, the study would not have been possible without the assistance and encouragement of Chancellor Jack W. Peltason. Through making his files available to me and through his concern for knowledge and understanding, whatever they might be, the Chancellor provided information, substance, and focus to the study.

I wish to thank the members of my committee who gave their time, energy, and suggestions to improving the study. The idea for the study was generated in Stanley Levy's course, "The College Student," and in subsequent conversations with him. Joseph Smith provided invaluable perspective, thoughtfulness, and insight. Jo Ann Fley, my adviser, read, criticized, and revised with patience and understanding. Her thoughtful comments regarding
improvements to be made, her assistance throughout the
course of the study, and her encouragement to proceed with
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How can I adequately thank my wife, Nan, and my
sometimes perplexed son, who wishes Daddy could play more
catch and "do less research?" Words of thanks, plus the
promise of a Colorado skiing trip, will have to suffice
for now, albeit rather inadequately.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

In the early morning hours of Tuesday, September 10, 1968, 244 black students were arrested in the Illini Union. Most of the group were entering freshmen or new transfer students who had arrived at the University of Illinois, Urbana, during the previous week to participate in a special orientation workshop. They were part of the newly expanded Special Educational Opportunities Program (SEOP) under which approximately five hundred academically and financially disadvantaged students were admitted to the University of Illinois effective September 1968.

The decision to admit five hundred disadvantaged students was made as late as May 2, 1968—just four months earlier. Before May 2 the University had committed 189 places to academically and financially disadvantaged students. Although there had been forces both within and without the University community urging a greater commitment to disadvantaged students, the catalyst for the decision to expand SEOP to five hundred students was the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., on April 4, 1968. According to Robert Eubanks and John Lee Johnson, this tragic occurrence unleashed strong guilt feelings among white liberals who wanted to atone for the murder of the black leader by making
a special effort to assist in the cause of equal opportunity.\textsuperscript{1} At the same time various local black groups, including the Black Student Association and the black community organizations in Champaign-Urbana, demanded an increase in black enrollment to one thousand, effective the following September.\textsuperscript{2} After a series of conversations with interested parties, Chancellor Peltason acceded to the demand, reduced to five hundred, and on May 2 announced the University's commitment to expand SEOP. The Chancellor made the commitment before gaining the formal approval of the Urbana-Champaign Senate.

The relatively short period of time between May 2, 1968, and the beginning of the fall semester limited the kind of careful planning and processing required to implement a large, expensive, and emotionally-charged program. The causes of the Illini Union sit-in which occurred on September 9-10 undoubtedly had their roots in the administrative errors and omissions of the preceding summer. The purpose of this study is to outline the relationship of black students to the University during the five years before May 1968; to describe the organization of the program from May through August; to describe the incident itself and the events immediately preceding it; and to analyze the incident as a reflection of administrative actions, or inactions, which occurred during the preceding days and weeks.
In describing the events and administrative actions leading up to the incident, the paper will examine three problems commonly cited by all parties as the motivating forces of the demonstration: unclear admissions policies regarding disadvantaged applicants, broken promises about financial aid awards, and inadequate housing. The paper will focus on the incident itself, attempting initially to discover what happened and secondly to determine the factors which contributed to the occurrence of the sit-in and the relative importance of each.

One must examine the events of the summer of 1968 within the context of the times. The decade of the 1960s was an explosive era characterized by serious challenges to the existing social and political orders. Catalyzed by the inspiration of Martin Luther King, Jr., the black movement for racial equality gathered momentum during the early part of the decade. In addition to opening previously segregated facilities to blacks, King's movement fostered black identity and pride all over the country. A charismatic leader, Martin Luther King provided not only the method--nonviolence--for obtaining racial equality but also the hope that equality actually could be realized. This combination of raised hopes and frustrated success led to explosions in the cities, evidence that black people would no longer submit meekly to racial discrimination.
The assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., on April 4, 1968, ostensibly by a white man, exacerbated the already strained racial situation. It provided added impetus in the drive for racial equality.

Also contributing to the explosive nature of the times was the dilemma caused by the American presence in Viet Nam. By 1968 the pro's and con's of U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia had been well established. Much of the active opposition to the war was centered on college campuses where anti-war groups, sometimes inspired by Students for a Democratic Society, tried to force colleges and universities to take institutional positions against the war. College anti-war activists, convinced of the correctness of their views, frequently organized sit-ins and mass demonstrations to dramatize their opposition to the war.

The opposition to the Viet Nam War and, to a lesser extent, the drive for racial equality centered on the college campus. The groups were not mutually exclusive; however, the black activists were more likely to concentrate their efforts on their issue than were the anti-war activists.

The special nature of the social and political atmosphere prevailing in 1968 produced two important concepts relevant to the study of the Illini Union incident in September, 1968. First, the late 1960s were characterized by arguments that the ends justify the means. Disruption,
force, and violence were common means used, especially by anti-war groups. For the most part, black activists on college campuses were non-violent, but they were not timid in expressing their views about the need for new or expanded programs for black students. Secondly, many blacks realized that burning cities relieved frustrations and dramatized the seriousness of the problem but did not create a solid foundation on which to build. Accordingly, they turned to education to obtain the skills, knowledge, and background necessary to achieve something new and different for themselves.

It is unlikely that all the unique circumstances which existed in 1968 will ever come together again. However, an understanding of the past often leads to better ideas and practices in the present and future. It is possible to argue that an examination of the September 1968 incident merely re-opens wounds difficult to heal. This study, however, proceeded from the point of view that the wounds caused by racial conflict in general and the Illini Union incident in particular have never healed, that racial problems still exist which must be resolved. The September incident is significant six years later, because it is representative of a still unresolved problem in American society.

The sit-in was a confrontation of racial perceptions and cultures. Certainly we do not know everything there is
to know about race relations, if the continuing controversy over school integration is any indication. Through the study of a specific incident in which black and white values clashed, anyone dealing with black-white relationships, especially in a context new to one of the groups, may increase his understanding of the varying perceptions, expectations, and needs of the different races.

There are important lessons in administrative practice to be learned from the organization of SEOP and the Illini Union incident. What was done that should not have been done? What was overlooked or not done that should have been done? What implementation policies were faulty or were less effective than they might have been? The answers to these and other conditions may be generalizable to other situations, even though the exact conditions which existed in 1968 may never exist again. The day of violent racial conflict may be past, but there is no reason to believe that there will never be a program established again in a similar manner and with similar administrative requirements. Many of the problems of the summer of 1968 resulted from attempting to implement a large program within a short period of time in a conservative organization which did not have the necessary administrative capacity or structure to meet the needs of a new constituency. Administrators, as well as others on the higher education firing line, can learn from the mistakes of the past in order to avoid them in the future.
The significance of the study of the Illini Union incident extends to the relationship between the University of Illinois and the black community in Champaign-Urbana. Over the years an atmosphere of hostility had developed in the black community toward the University's employment practices and elitist admissions policies. The small number of local blacks who were employed at the University were limited in the types of jobs available. Similarly very few members of the black community could meet the high admissions standards, and those who could often chose to attend other universities because of the University of Illinois' reputation of being unsympathetic to black social and academic needs.

Given this historical background of hostility and distrust, it is surprising that no one has written the story of the September sit-in to correct some of the misleading newspaper accounts and rumors which surfaced shortly thereafter. Undoubtedly many opinions were formed on the basis of incomplete or inaccurate information. For example, it is generally believed that the major damage in the Illini Union was done by local blacks who were not part of SEOP. However the people involved in the destruction have not been identified; one prominent leader of the local black community says he does not know who committed the damage. The point here is that, based on best guess, the local black community was blamed initially for the damage in
the Union, and this theory was widely circulated and believed. The fact that positive identification was not established was not widely circulated, leaving the original story intact in most peoples' minds. Blaming the local black community was characteristic of the traditional conflict between black students and the black community, a theme which will be discussed further in Chapter Seven.

The story of the Illini Union sit-in of September, 1968, and the events which preceded it needs to be told to correct many misunderstandings and misconceptions generated by the chain of events. In this way, a few of the many barriers to positive town-gown relationships may be removed.
Chapter One Footnotes


2 Interview with Joseph Smith, University of Illinois, Champaign, Illinois, May 20, 1974.

3 Interview with John Lee Johnson, June 19, 1974.
CHAPTER TWO
HOW THE RESEARCH WAS CONDUCTED

This study was conceived primarily as an investigation of an administrative problem rather than as a sociological or anthropological study. The interaction within the group of black students and clash of different cultures are two topics which should be discussed to provide a full understanding of the problem. However, the study neither focused on nor systematically examined these issues, as they are beyond the expertise of the author. Instead the paper concentrated on the administrative actions and decisions which contributed to the misunderstandings and lack of trust which culminated in the events of September 9-10.

Three basic sources of information were used. The first source was newspaper accounts in selected newspapers. Since the author was not in Champaign in 1968, the newspaper accounts were consulted to obtain a general idea of what occurred in September of that year. The newspapers that were reviewed included the Champaign-Urbana News Gazette and The Courier, Chicago Tribune, Chicago Daily News, and St. Louis Post-Dispatch. In addition, the Daily Illini, the campus student newspaper, was consulted more extensively because of its greater coverage of campus issues.
The accuracy of newspaper accounts is suspect under any conditions, but especially so in a crisis situation. The newspaper descriptions were undoubtedly distorted, partly because of poorly informed sources, partly because no one knew the whole story, and in the case of at least one newspaper, the Chicago Tribune, partly because of editorial bias. Nevertheless, newspaper accounts were useful in determining the broad sequence and outline of events and in generating questions to be posed during interviews.

The second source of information was the record compiled by various university offices, consisting of statements and memoranda written by administrators involved in the planning of the program or in the culminating incident. These records were scattered and, for the most part, limited. The most comprehensive records discovered were located in the Office of the Chancellor. Other records used came from the Office of Admissions and Records, the Office of Student Personnel, and the Office of the Dean of Students.

The written record by no means provided a definitive description of what occurred from May to September. There were many gaps in the record; for example, little was written about the nature or the success of the special orientation workshop held early in September. The written record was invaluable, though, as a source of information rather than after-the-fact opinions. Even though there was
brought diverse rather than similar perspectives to the study.

The interviews were conducted primarily in the seven week period beginning May 20, 1974. However, three interviews were held the previous summer, partly as trial interviews and partly because of these individuals' imminent departure from campus. In addition to the longer interviews, each lasting about one hour, there were many brief conversations with various people.

The interviews were designed to be quite flexible, to allow each individual to relate as much as he could in his preferred way. With the accumulation of facts and information, the questions asked in later interviews became more specific. However, all interviews were planned to allow probing of the interviewee's recollection, wherever it should lead. All but two of the interviews were tape recorded for later review and consultation.

In addition to the three basic sources of information, an unexpected source which does not fit neatly into any category emerged during a conversation with David Eisenman, a physics graduate student in 1968. Without any official responsibility but with an intense emotional involvement, Eisenman, as much as anyone else, attempted during the weeks after the incident to uncover an accurate account of what happened at the Illini Union on September 9-10 in order to correct misleading newspaper accounts and rumors.
Throughout the three weeks after the sit-in, Eisenman recorded his findings and his thoughts on five tapes. Three main themes run through the tapes: (1) the inaccuracy of the newspaper accounts of the sit-in, and the inability or unwillingness of the University to correct them; (2) the attempts of white, far-left organizations such as SDS to use the sit-in of blacks for their own purposes; and (3) the problem of determining how the campus disciplinary hearings would proceed. Each of these themes was beyond the scope of this study which concentrated on the events leading up to the incident and the sit-in itself rather than on the aftermath.

Fortunately, the tapes contained isolated segments of Eisenman's efforts to reconstruct the nature of the sit-in. Particularly important were his recorded comments of conversations he had had with some administrators shortly after the incident. These comments suggested the attitudes which prevailed during September 1968 and provided a basis for comparison with the interviews conducted during the summer of 1974.

There are limitations unique to each of the sources of information. The problem of the accuracy of newspaper accounts has already been mentioned, and need not be reiterated. The written record, even with its inaccuracies, provides a view of what people were doing and thinking in specific situations, but one must infer connections between
various letters and memoranda. The written record does not
tell much about intra-office operations, which would have
been particularly useful to know in the case of the Office
of Admissions and Records. Nor does the written record
contain complete information about decisions made orally
over the telephone or in the hallway, although some decisions
made in this manner were formalized in writing. And lastly,
University records are scattered and, in the case of
undergraduate disciplinary proceedings, inaccessible
because of their confidentiality.

Because of the limitations on the information avail-
able through newspapers and university records, personal
interviews were selected as the best way to collect useful
and meaningful information. While there was some overlap
of firsthand experience, the individuals interviewed were
involved in the SEOP implementation and sit-in in different
ways and at different times. Because individual experiences
were quite different, unstructured interviews were selected
to permit in-depth probing of each individual's knowledge
obtained mainly through firsthand experience.

Using interviews in a research project injects
limitations inherent in this methodology into the study.
The individual interviewed may be unable or unwilling to tell
the truth. Inability to tell the truth may be caused by
normal blurring of memories over time, by lack of proximity
to the events in question, and by lack of attention in 1968
to what was occurring. "Inability to tell the truth leads to errors of omission, rather than commission, because of lack of completeness or lack of balance in observation, recollection, or narrative."  

In the unstructured interviews, all of the causes for inability to tell the truth mentioned above were present. Distinguishing between blurring of memory and lack of attention was nearly impossible, except when the interviewer was able to add forgotten details to stimulate memory. For the most part, the lack of attention was not a problem, for the people selected for interviews were closely involved with SEOP at some point.

Despite reading newspaper accounts, written records, and holding casual conversations to determine individual roles beforehand, many interview questions asked could not be answered because the interviewee was not as close to the event as expected.

Louis Gottschalk, in Understanding History, writes that unwillingness to tell the truth leads to misstatements of fact more than omissions of fact. The experience of this study was that there were misstatements and omissions of fact, when the truth would have placed the interviewee in an unfavorable light. The most common block against candor was the possibility that candor might produce a judgment of "being at fault." Very few individuals, the Chancellor being a notable exception, were willing to admit
that their offices could have made decisions with better results. One individual demonstrated a remarkable lack of memory when the likely answer would have cast an unfavorable light on his office.

It is reasonable that many individuals are unwilling to talk candidly about the events of May-September 1968. Clarence Shelley believes that little good can result from replaying 1968, unless the study is used to improve delivery of SEOP-type programs. Furthermore, he implied that many of the facts regarding the sit-in cannot be revealed because publicity may cause federal authorities to press still outstanding felony charges against unidentified people. For many, the scars caused by the September 1968 incident have not totally healed, and they are re-opened during each succeeding racial conflict. Many individuals are reluctant to discuss 1968 because of painful memories of that summer.

To overcome the problems of inability or unwillingness to tell the truth, the author attempted to ask similar questions to individuals who shared similar experiences. Overlapping experiences provided the opportunity to corroborate testimony. As a result, the differences are ones of interpretation rather than of facts.

An important limitation of the project necessarily resulted from the choice of people to be interviewed. Because the project emphasized administrative actions, all but two of the people selected were administrators; no black
students were interviewed because very few who were involved in the sit-in are still on campus. For the most part, black students were not involved in the day-to-day policy decisions regarding the organization of the program. The author attempted to obtain a balanced, firsthand view from the administrators involved rather than from all participants.

The reader must be aware that the author writes from a point of view developed through working with students--some of them black--in a financial aid office at another college. This experience developed the belief that obtaining properly completed application forms from any person is difficult and time consuming, but especially so when the person has not had any practice, is not accustomed to deadlines, and suspects the effort will be futile. Thus the generally-held belief that the University made serious mistakes during the summer must be tempered by the view that the process would have been much smoother if the applicants had completed their paperwork promptly and accurately.
CHAPTER TWO FOOTNOTES


2 Tape recordings made by David Eisenman, September, 1968.


4 Ibid., p. 160.

5 Interview with Clarence Shelley, University of Illinois, Champaign, Illinois, July 3, 1974.
CHAPTER THREE
BLACK STUDENTS AND THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BEFORE 1968

In spite of a 1946 Board of Trustees resolution "to favor and strengthen those attitudes and social philosophies which are necessary to create a community atmosphere in which race prejudice cannot thrive,"¹ the University of Illinois did not actively pursue the breakdown of racial inequality until the middle 1960s. In the fall of 1963, according to best estimates, there were only about 350 blacks on campus of whom about 10% were athletes. In January 1964, President Henry articulated a new direction in the Faculty Letter:

We have a new consciousness... that it is not sufficient that the University be passively available to all: I believe that we must take more positive steps to help overcome the disabilities that stem from decades of inequality in our society, some of it hidden and unconscious until now. I am in no way suggesting that we should alter our standards for any student or for any employee... But as we build ramps for our physically disabled students, without violating our standards, I believe that we must offset some of the disabilities arising from racial and social inequality by building psychological and special assistance "ramps" for young people who need them.²

The President's Eighth Faculty Conference was convened at Allerton Park March 26-28, 1965, with continuing education and educational opportunity for disadvantaged students the topics of conversation. The latter issue was by far the more controversial; the conference went on record
as strongly favoring a more extensive program to meet the academic and social needs of black students, but it could not reach agreement on how this might be accomplished.

One of the first efforts to measure the type of supportive services necessary for disadvantaged students occurred during the summer of 1965. The project, initiated by Dean Rogers of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and directed by Frank Costin, a professor of psychology, tried to examine the academic and other difficulties encountered by students from high schools located in or near culturally disadvantaged neighborhoods. The report of the project indicated that the disadvantaged students studied demonstrated deficiency in high school preparation in verbal skills; had more personal problems likely to interfere with academic progress; and held unrealistic opinions of their academic achievement. However, the Office of Student Personnel and especially Dean Shelden believed that the project was hastily devised without proper planning and accomplished very little. 3

The first pilot program of supportive services began in 1966-67 under the direction of Jean Hill, the Assistant Dean of Women. Its stated purposes were to provide a research design structure, to evaluate a program of supportive services, and to provide special assistance for disadvantaged students. 4 Nevertheless the program was informal and loosely
structured, and the main purpose became helping black girls stay in school. One hundred and thirty-four students participated, including one hundred blacks and thirty-four inner city students. A second pilot program was authorized for 1967-68 for a similar number of students. Fifty-nine black freshmen and 112 others with some economic and educational disadvantages participated.

During the same year, Chancellor Feltason established an ad hoc Committee for Special Education Opportunities under the chairmanship of Joseph Smith. The Chancellor also assigned responsibility for special programs for culturally disadvantaged students, including recruitment of a full time program director, to Dean of Students Stanton Millet, who delegated the responsibility to Dean Shelden. Dean Shelden hired Clarence Shelley in April 1968—after King’s assassination but before the expanded commitment.

The 1967-68 academic year saw some evidence in the Office of Admissions and Records (OAR) that the University was sincere in its efforts to increase the number of disadvantaged students on campus. For the fall of 1967, thirty spaces were pre-empted for disadvantaged students eligible for Educational Opportunity Grants (EOG). A full time position in OAR was established to assist in the identification of prospective 'disadvantaged' applicants for admission, to coordinate the procedures related to their application for admission and financial aid, and to assist, in cooperation with other offices, in their orientation and adjustment to campus life...
Thus there was significant evidence that the University was expanding its commitment to disadvantaged students. In fact, the number of pre-empted spaces for entering freshmen for the fall of 1968 was raised to 189, a small number compared with the total enrollment of the University, but a large number compared with the total of four hundred blacks enrolled in all classes in the fall of 1966.

Looking backward, there were many reasons why black enrollment was low at the University of Illinois. Most obviously major congregations of blacks were closer to other cities than to Champaign-Urbana. Furthermore, black students sensed and, in many cases, experienced racial discrimination and the lack of facilities designed to meet their social needs.  

An especially important reason for low black enrollment was the nature of the criteria for admission. It was not until the late 1960s that colleges and universities began to recognize that the standard admissions tests and criteria might not adequately describe the culturally disadvantaged student's potential for college success. Additionally the early 1960s was the post-Sputnik era when academic excellence was more a compulsion than a goal. Admissions standards became more rigid instead of more cognizant of cultural differences which affect standardized test scores. The admissions criteria, therefore, eliminated many potentially
good students, many of them black, whose culturally affected test scores could meet minimum, but not competitive, standards.

One may easily conclude that before May, 1968, the University of Illinois was quite undistinguished in its program of racial equality. This is a neutral rather than a negative conclusion, for generally speaking, the university administration favored policies promoting racial equality. But the political climate and, more importantly, the social atmosphere did not encourage, or recognize the need for, aggressive policies to rectify the hidden or unconscious inequality in our society until the late 1960s. The murder of Martin Luther King, Jr., on April 4, 1968, played a large role in changing the University's attitude from one of passive support to active assistance.
CHAPTER THREE FOOTNOTES


6 Ibid.

7 "Special Educational Opportunities Program," n.d., Office of Student Personnel files.


9 See the Harry M. Tiebout Papers, 1941-1963 in the University of Illinois Archives, Series 15/16/21.

10 Ibid.
CHAPTER FOUR
THE AGREEMENT TO EXPAND—AND HOW IT WAS IMPLEMENTED

There is general agreement that the death of Martin Luther King, Jr., was the event which, more than any other single event, changed the University's commitment to equal opportunity. It focused attention on the inadequacies of the existing employment and admissions practices. And more importantly it provided the motivation for blacks and whites to work especially hard to accomplish the goals of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Although King was allegedly murdered by a white man, probably acting on his own, white society as a whole seemed to accept responsibility for his assassination. Even white people who had not been involved in civil rights activities previously sensed that the United States had lost an important leader, a symbol of non-violence. The decision to expand SEOP to five hundred students was made less than a month after King's assassination, in an atmosphere in which white society was especially anxious to compensate for King's loss in some way.

The willingness to do something to compensate for King's assassination was not always grounded in a genuine desire to achieve or work toward racial equality. There were other factors involved in the compensatory efforts
common in the late 1960s, not the least of which was fear.
Many white people were apprehensive about the possibility
of retaliation by blacks, especially with the memory of
recent riots and devastation in black ghettos in many
cities. While most equal opportunity programs in universities
were established with genuine concern for racial equality,
one must not ignore fear of the consequences of not
establishing such a program as a motivating force.

From the previous chapter, it should be clear that
there were forces in the university community working for
equal opportunities before April 4. One of the most
influential reports was the so-called Spencer report which
emanated from the ad hoc Committee for Special Education
Opportunities. Circulated in March, 1968, this report
proposed a gradual increase in the admission of black students
to a peak of six hundred per year in 1972. It also recommended
changes in admission and retention standards, as well as
intensified counseling and tutoring.\footnote{The Spencer report
was widely read and discussed, but nothing was done about it.
Chancellor Peltason was quoted as calling it "just a
recommendation."} In fact, the recommendations were far
more conservative than Chancellor Peltason wanted,\footnote{but
the funds were not available to finance a substantial increase
in the size of the program.}

Obtaining necessary funds is a chronic problem of
university administrators. Because of the shortage of funds,
Chancellor Peltason had intended to increase the size of SEOP gradually, funding it a little at a time. According to the Chancellor, there would have been no chance of getting the necessary funds for a sizeable increase if there hadn't been a change in the national climate. With the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., the catalyst for change and action appeared. The Chancellor believed that SEOP was an idea whose time had come.4

One of the popular stories generated by the events of April, 1968, is that the Black Students Association (BSA) demanded a larger program, and that it coerced the Chancellor to act. According to the Chancellor, this is not true. There were too few blacks on campus in the spring of 1968 to be much of a political force, and Chancellor Peltason had a strong personal commitment to enlarging and strengthening SEOP. The program came about by accident; after King's assassination, the black students asked if they could recruit black students, and this evolved into the agreement made public May 2.5

The BSA was not the only organization or group of people who strongly advocated an active program to achieve racial equality. The Citizens for Racial Justice (CRJ) was an action group composed mostly of whites whose major purpose was nondiscrimination in university employment. CRJ was also interested in recruitment of disadvantaged students,
but it concentrated most of its efforts on achieving equal employment opportunities for blacks. In an April 22, 1968 statement for general university distribution, the Chancellor replied to CRJ's employment efforts and indicated his personal commitment to equal opportunity: "We have been doing some things, but not enough. We have made some small gains, but small gains are not enough. The racial crisis we face today demands gains of gigantic proportions." 

Most of the other forces encouraging racial equality programs were less organized. There were few black professors on campus. Few of them had tenure and thus felt restrained in what they could say. There were other concerned citizens and faculty members as well. One of the most important was John Lee Johnson, a young, unofficial leader in the local black community. An outspoken and dynamic individual, Johnson succeeded in presenting the case for increased admission of local black students, participated actively in the negotiations with the Chancellor, and significantly affected the "demands" made by the BSA. Johnson had no official title or responsibility in either the black community or university, but his influence on the course of events in April and May, during the summer, and in September was recognized and respected.

The commitment to racial equality announced by Chancellor Peltason on May 2, 1968, was distinguished by how it was made and by its informality. Unlike normal policy,
the Chancellor first made the commitment to expand SEOP and then asked for faculty and trustee approval. Common sense suggests that this was a risky decision, especially considering the large expenditure of funds necessary to finance the expanded program. That the Chancellor made the decision unilaterally is further indication of his commitment to racial equality. He believed that the program would not have passed if he had merely recommended it to the faculty.\textsuperscript{8} There is general agreement that the program would not have been possible, at least for the fall of 1968, if the Chancellor had asked the usual faculty committees for approval before making the commitment.\textsuperscript{9} As it turned out, the Urbana-Champaign Senate adopted two recommendations on June 3, 1968 which supported larger numbers of disadvantaged students and alternative standards of admission for them.\textsuperscript{10}

The commitment announced on May 2 was an informal one, in the sense that it was morally rather than legally binding. There was no contract signed or agreed to. However, the University committed itself, through the Chancellor's unilateral action, to actively recruit five hundred disadvantaged students for the fall of 1968, to make every effort to obtain the required funds, and to hire additional staff members for support services.

The May 2 news release announcing Project 500, as it was popularly named, was brief. It mentioned the
University's intention to accelerate "the effort to identify and recruit students for the Special Education Opportunity Program"; the BSA's role in recruiting; and the hiring of a Dean of Educational Opportunity. The agreement reached between the BSA and the Chancellor was broader than the news release suggested. In his May 2 letter to Dan Dixon, President of BSA, the Chancellor indicated six areas of agreement about what would aid the acceleration:

1. The enrollment targets for black students contained in the draft report of the ad hoc special education committee (Spencer report) were too low.

2. "An attempt will be made to increase the number of students" in SEOP "to at least 500 by September 1968, with the understanding that all students admitted... will meet minimum admission requirements."

3. The Dean of SEOP would report directly to the Chancellor's office.

4. BSA would be "directly consulted in the adoption and the implementation of programs under the direction of the Dean of Special Educational Opportunity Program."

5. Students could be admitted to the program before forms relating to financial aid were completed. (According to the Chancellor, the program was defined from the beginning as one for all economically disadvantaged people, not just blacks. Without a completed financial aid application, there was no way to tell whether a student qualified for the program when his admission application was reviewed.)
6. "The University will make a vigorous effort to recruit one-third of the special educational opportunity students from the local community."\textsuperscript{12}

The content of the May 2 agreement became an issue in the aftermath of the September sit-in. The BSA could not find its copy of the letter, reproduced in Appendix C in this paper, and Dan Dixon was charged by other blacks with intentionally destroying it because he was believed to be an undercover agent of the FBI.\textsuperscript{13}

The decision to substantially increase the scope of SEOP forced major changes and acceleration in administrative responsibilities, all of which had to be accomplished by September, only four months away. One of the most important concerns was the development of courses, some of them remedial, designed to meet special needs of the disadvantaged students. Additionally, counseling and tutoring facilities had to be arranged, especially in the mathematics and English departments. Responsibility for the development of these support services was assigned to Clarence Shelley, the Director of SEOP, who began work on July 1, 1968. Successful accomplishment of this responsibility was not an issue in the Union sit-in, and therefore will not be discussed here.

One of the first problems which required a decision after the agreement was made was the place of SEOP in the University's administrative structure. Should it be a free standing office authorized to administer a separate curriculum?
Should it have responsibilities for admissions, financial aid, and housing parallel to the respective college offices? Or should it be integrated into an existing structure in order to advise and coordinate?

On May 7 a proposal for a Martin Luther King, Jr. Curriculum in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences appeared, bearing the names of Roger Applebee, Thomas Bloomer, King Broadrick, and Robert Waller, assistant deans in Liberal Arts and Sciences. This curriculum was meant for high risk, marginally prepared students, who would stay in the curriculum until the supervising dean certified their readiness to enter a regular LAS curriculum. However, the Chancellor ruled out from the start any separate or easier program for disadvantaged students; he wanted them to be integrated into existing programs, with each college determining how it could best support its SEOP students.

The Chancellor's decision to decentralize administration of the program undoubtedly led to coordination problems, as we shall see. Instead of setting up a parallel structure within SEOP to admit, finance, and house, the Chancellor chose to retain those functions in the established University offices. Although his decision may be questioned on the basis of the limited time available, decentralization encouraged the integration of SEOP into the total life of the University. Furthermore the incorporation of SEOP into an existing office, the Office of
Student Personnel, gave it leverage to negotiate with individual colleges which it probably would not have had as a new, free standing unit.\textsuperscript{14}

On May 9 the Chancellor began a series of meetings with a task force to mount a program of recruitment, financial aid, and supportive services. The initial burden fell on the Office of Admissions and Records to design a method to recruit at least 500 disadvantaged students and to process their applications expeditiously.

Before the actual recruiting process could be set up, the University had to clarify the standards on which admissions decisions would be based, and the type of student the recruiters should seek. The reader will remember that one of the provisions of the May 2 agreement was that all students should meet established minimum admissions standards. For beginning freshmen, there were two facets of minimum standards: a combination of high school rank in class and test scores, and a high school subject pattern for the college or curriculum of the student's choice. Transfer applicants had to have a 3.25 grade point average to meet minimum transfer requirements.\textsuperscript{15}

However, it became clear early in the recruiting process that it would not be feasible to require meeting minimum standards. The College of LAS, to which the majority of students applied, requires two years of foreign language study in high school. Many of the high schools from which the disadvantaged students were likely to come
did not offer foreign language courses. The result was that, of the 565 students who registered in September, 491 met the minimum high school rank in class-test score combination or transfer G.P.A. requirement. However, 291 did not meet the high school subject pattern required.\textsuperscript{16}

Because of the late recruiting season, the University anticipated that "super blacks" had already made plans to attend other universities. The Chancellor, for one, believed that there were many poor people who could meet minimum standards and who could succeed academically with counseling and tutoring. The short and late recruiting period hindered identification of students just below the cream of the crop, and it is likely that the SEOP group admitted in September 1968 included many students less qualified than anticipated.

Recruiting had not been a function of the Office of Admissions and Records previously and, therefore, there was no experience on which to base decisions. The method chosen to recruit was based on both practicality and expediency. Black student recruiters were selected because they were available, because many had recruited informally during the previous Christmas vacation, and because they were committed to the project. Additionally, it was felt that black recruiters could better relate to black applicants, could describe the University as perceived by black people.
In May twenty-four full time equivalent recruiters were selected by BSA and approved, but not screened, by OAR. Thirteen students worked in Chicago under a student coordinator; about the same number of students worked in other areas of the state; and two part-time recruiters worked in New York and Philadelphia. Most of the recruiters were paid under the Federal College Work-Study Program through which the University contributed only 15% of the total salary.

According to the then Associate Director of Admissions and Records, Charles Warwick, before starting field work the student recruiters attended three training sessions involving University personnel, and another training session run by student coordinators with an OAR officer present as a consultant. Although the written record does not correspond with personal recollections, it seems likely that the training sessions were organized by Charles Warwick and Robert Corcoran, Associate Directors of OAR, and that the sessions dealing with financial aid were directed by Ed Sanford, Associate Director of Student Financial Aids. These training sessions were designed to discuss the methods of recruiting, procedures, and matters of substance, especially regarding what could be said about admission and financial aid.

Unfortunately the training meetings took place just before the end of the spring semester. Although attendance
at the meetings was good, the recruiters were in exam
week and were bound to have other things on their minds.
Whether the meetings were held at the beginning or end of
the semester probably had a minimal effect, however. The
important fact was that it was virtually impossible to
train recruiters adequately in three short meetings,
especially regarding financial aid. There simply was
not enough time available before summer vacation to hold
a more elaborate training program.

One of the major factors in the September sit-in
was the difference between expectation and reality. It is
clear that what the recruiters told the applicants and what
they were authorized to say did not always match. This was
particularly crucial regarding financial aid. Many students
were told their financial need would be met. Assuming their
need to be complete, many were surprised to discover that
a family financial contribution was expected, that financial
need was determined by an examination of a Parents' Confidential
Statement, and that a "free ride" was not automatic.

OAR tried to maintain contact with the recruiters
during the nine week recruiting period which began June 10
and ended August 9. There was continual contact with the
downtown recruiters based in Champaign, periodic contact
with the Chicago group, and only occasional mail contact
with the out of staters. On June 21, Margaret Ismaila,
Assistant to the Director of Admissions and Records, wrote
a memo to the downtown recruiters, suggesting ways to
make contact with likely candidates. And on July 17, she prepared another memo for all recruiters, listing the personal qualities most likely to insure success for disadvantaged students at the University of Illinois.

As early as May 17, before the student recruiters were even selected, the University began to open lines of communication with Illinois high schools, especially in Chicago. Through an exchange of correspondence, the Bureau of Pupil Personnel Services of the Chicago Board of Education not only identified nine cooperating Chicago schools but also sent letters to the schools introducing SEOP and the recruiters.22

On June 10 the student recruiters began to work. They were armed with admission and financial aid application papers which, because application forms could not ask for race, had a yellow piece of paper stapled to them. In this way OAR could identify possible SEOP participants. Remember that SEOP status was determined on an economic basis and that many recruited students were admitted before their financial aid forms documented eligibility for the program.

The recruiters had to find eligible students, help them complete application forms, and send the application to OAR. In Chicago the recruiters were authorized to carry the high school transcripts and applications to Bill Savage, the student coordinator, who would forward them to OAR.
Outside of Chicago the recruiters were told to have the transcripts sent by the high schools directly to OAR.²³

If the recruiters' success is measured in terms of the number of applicants their efforts generated, their work was very successful. Eventually, over 1300 applied for Project 500; 748 were approved (plus 20 added after September 10), and 565 registered.²⁴ Nevertheless, the results through July were anything but encouraging, and they supported the concern of some people that little could be expected from the recruiters who would treat the recruiting as "a summer rip-off."²⁵ By July 16, 369 SEOPs had been approved for admission, of which 219 resulted from applications submitted after June 10.²⁶

As early as June 25 recruiting patterns began to take shape. The Chicago recruiters were well organized, most were working hard, and names of possible applicants came unsolicited to the Chicago Circle campus office. The picture downstate was not as bright. Often the recruiters were not residents of the city where they were recruiting, and SEOP was not well-known despite earlier publicity and notification letters sent to high schools.²⁷

The Champaign-Urbana area was a puzzle and a disappointment. Recall that one of the six parts of the May 2 agreement was that the University would try to recruit one-third of the SEOP students locally. This was not a firm quota, but it did represent a goal that was
unattainable. There were not 165 people in the local black community who were both qualified and interested in attending the University of Illinois. Many applications were distributed, but few were completed. And of the few who applied, some were admitted only after the lobbying efforts of John Lee Johnson and other members of the Concerned Citizens Committee of Champaign-Urbana. In spite of Johnson's efforts, the local contingent was smaller than hoped, and more students from other parts of the state were admitted.

The recruiting picture may have looked poor to some administrators in July, but not to the BSA. By the end of the month the BSA was confident enough of reaching the 500 goal that it tried to have the May 2 agreement read 500 in addition to the 189 places committed long before April 4. When Project 500 was announced, there was some uncertainty in OAR on this very point, but the BSA could present no evidence in July to support the 500 plus 189 theory.

Throughout the summer, OAR was troubled by the problem of special admissions. As mentioned earlier, a large proportion of the applicants did not meet minimum admission standards, often because of the foreign language requirement. All of these applications had to be reviewed by the college to which they applied. One observer believes that there was resentment toward SEOP in some college offices which could
not accept the idea of admitting students with less competitive credentials. When these colleges were slow in processing special admission applications, the BSA assumed they harbored recalcitrant attitudes bordering on racism.  

Another observer more intimately involved in SEOP discovered no evidence of racism in the University administration; he attributed the slow processing of applications to problems in the normal machinery.  

Despite the series of minor crises beginning in June, OAR believed by the end of August that enough students had been approved for admission so that 500 would register. Of course there was no way that OAR could determine how many of the approved students would register. Lacking any better criteria for judgment, it applied its usual standard of prediction that about 65% of the approved students would register. Slightly better than 75% registered, and the unexpected students contributed to financial aid difficulties, housing problems, and an appearance of University inefficiency and lack of good faith.  

Logically, OAR began its part of the implementation process by determining the broad framework of relevant admissions policy, turning to individual cases later. Similarly the initial problems with funding and financial aid were not so much problems of distributing funds as they were problems of total program financing. As of May 2 the Chancellor did not know where the necessary funds would
raised by the end of the semester, far less than the $300,000 goal. There was resistance not to the idea of memorializing King but to supporting SEOP which was thought to be racist. Additionally many expected SEOP to lower standards and to eliminate 500 "white" spaces despite strong reassurances from high level administrators.\textsuperscript{33}

Most of the SEOP students were expected to be Illinois residents and very needy financially, and therefore eligible for scholarships awarded by the Illinois State Scholarship Commission (ISSC). Late in May, Charles Warwick reported that the ISSC would consider applications for these tuition scholarships if all the paperwork was completed by July 1.\textsuperscript{34} The deadline was later extended to July 15.

The University made every effort to obtain foundation funding for SEOP but, with one exception had no success. The Ford Foundation awarded a grant of $37,820 for a fifteen month period beginning July 1, to be used for recruiting, counseling, tutoring, and orientation activities.\textsuperscript{35}

By far the major source of financial aid funding was the federal government. On May 29 four University administrators (Charles Warwick, Associate Director of OAR, Jean Hill, Assistant Dean of Women, Joseph Smith, Staff Associate in the Chancellor's Office, and Ed Sanford, Associate Director of Student Financial Aids) met with administrators of the Chicago Regional Office of HEW to ask for an increase in federal student financial aids. The
University had asked for increases of $255,000 for Educational Opportunity Grants, $250,000 for National Defense Student Loans, and $30,000 for the College Work-Study Program. Beyond expectations, HEW agreed to a $340,000 increase in EOG funds of which 25% could be transferred to NDSL if used for Project 500 members. The May 29 meeting was a high point of the summer's efforts to implement the Chancellor's commitment.

The additional HEW funds meant that nearly sufficient financial aid funds were available, if reality followed the expected script. Unfortunately a series of things happened in August which changed the financial aid picture drastically. The volume of admissions applications increased dramatically by the end of July, and any thoughts that the 500 goal would not be reached disappeared. Furthermore, the deadline for applications to the Illinois State Scholarship Commission had passed, and that alternative means of funding had been lost. Fewer than expected local students were admitted, thus eliminating the hope for free room and board for this group.

The major misconception which revealed itself in August was the large group of out-of-state residents. No one anticipated the possibility that many non-residents would apply. Some had been expected, to be sure, mainly from Holmes County in Mississippi where the University had established contacts early in 1968. Ninety-seven of
the 565 SEOPs who registered in September were non-residents, many of them from Philadelphia where the BSA recruiter, Rosalind Frazier, was especially industrious and successful.

One must digress briefly to explain the impact of so many non-residents. For 1968-69 the estimated budget for an unmarried resident student was $1,800, but it was $600 higher for a non-resident student. The University had planned to meet resident budgets, assuming full need, with an $800 Educational Opportunity Grant, $270 tuition scholarship from ISSC, and a loan of about $500. A small family contribution and/or summer job savings could make up the difference.

Non-resident students not only had higher costs to meet but also were ineligible for Illinois State Scholarship Commission awards. The only funds the University could use to supplement the $800 EOG were loans. As a result the expected loan portion of the financial aid package became much higher than desired, especially for non-residents.

It was not until August 21 that the decision was made to admit no more non-residents. The decision was made late in the summer partly out of ignorance of the extent of the problem and partly because the University agreed with the BSA to approve admissible students on a first come, first serve basis. The possibility of a large group of non-residents was not anticipated; after all, there were only two part-time recruiters outside Illinois.

There were other problems with financial aid during the summer. There is evidence that the BSA recruiters, as
well as many administrators, did not understand the intricacies of financial aid application and documentation. This relates partly to the shortness of the training sessions; however, a full understanding of financial aid administration cannot be obtained even in a week, and one must question the University's decision to allow recruiters to discuss financial aid with applicants when their training was minimal.

Another nagging problem throughout the summer was the difficulty in obtaining properly completed financial aid applications. Because of the short time period, the financial aids office agreed to have the Parents' Confidential Statements sent directly to Urbana rather than through the regional Educational Testing Service (ETS) office for processing. Many financial aid forms were sent to OAR which forwarded them to the Office of Financial Aids. Often the information received was incomplete and had to be returned to the applicant's parents. And because the applications were not processed through ETS, they had to be personally evaluated by either Ed Sanford or Howard Bers, a graduate assistant. The financial aid process was therefore slow because of difficulty obtaining information, because of hand processing by only two people (no money had been budgeted for increased staff), and because action on financial aid applications necessarily followed OAR action.38

The problems of the housing office were similar to those of the financial aid office in that both had to wait for
OAR decisions before they could act. The housing office could assign rooms only after OAR admitted a student. The normal coordinating procedure called for OAR to notify housing via a data processing card as soon as an accepted student indicated he would come. This procedure did not work for SEOP applicants who were generally slow responding to OAR. Furthermore, the data processing card sent to housing did not distinguish SEOPs from any other students. Thus housing had to manually compare data processing cards with OAR SEOP lists.\(^3\) If OAR had been able to identify SEOP students positively and transmit this via data processing cards, a large part of housing's problem would have been solved.

Less than two weeks after SEOP was expanded, the housing office on May 15 agreed to reserve five hundred dormitory spaces for the program. It decided to scatter the spaces, with no more than five or six SEOPs on a floor; black students did not have to be assigned as roommates. Because race information was not available on application forms, Project 500 students could not ask to room with another black; however, they could ask to room with another project participant, who would probably be black.\(^4\)

Whether five hundred SEOPs would enroll and reserve dormitory space were important questions in the housing office during the summer. On August 7, the then Director of Housing, Paul Doebel, wrote a memo to Chancellor Peltason indicating that
very few disadvantaged students had reserved dormitory space. OAR had approved 550 students by then, according to Paul Doebele, but only 167 had indicated that they planned to come. Of these 167, only fifty-four had arranged for space in residence halls. Based on these statistics, Doebele expressed doubt about needing five hundred housing spaces and suggested reducing the reserved places to two hundred. He was concerned about the financial loss empty spaces would mean and about the bad public relations resulting from denying housing to other applicants on the grounds all spaces had been filled.41

Doebele's memo brought an immediate response from Charles Warwick. He indicated that August 7 was a premature date to reduce the number of reserved spaces, because another two hundred students beyond 550 might be admitted. Although August 9 was the end of the recruiting period, a few recruiters were being retained for an additional two weeks to contact approved applicants who had not indicated whether they were coming, who had not completed housing applications, or who had not finished financial aid paperwork.42

The question faced by housing was central to the many issues which surfaced in September: no one knew which or how many students would arrive for the special orientation workshop beginning September 3. The housing office did not reduce the number of places reserved for SEOP students, at least not before August 21, but it had no advance warning that the number registering would be sixty-five higher than
expected. In the number and composition (non-resident) of
the registering group can be found a partial explanation of
the events which occurred in the first ten days of September.
CHAPTER FOUR FOOTNOTES


2 Ibid.

3 Interview with Jack Peltason, University of Illinois, Champaign, Illinois, June 17, 1974.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 Statement of J. W. Peltason, April 22, 1968, Office of Admissions and Records files.


8 Interview with Jack Peltason, June 17, 1974.


12 Jack Peltason to Dan Dixon, May 2, 1968, Office of Admissions and Records files.


16 Charles E. Warwick, memo to the files, October 7, 1968, Office of Admissions and Records files.


18 Interview with Charles E. Warwick, University of Illinois, Champaign, Illinois, May 21, 1974.
19 Charles E. Warwick to Chicago Tribune, September 17, 1968.


21 Interview with Charles E. Warwick, May 21, 1974.

22 Warwick to the Chicago Tribune, September 17, 1968.


24 "The Special Educational Opportunities Program at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign," October 18, 1968, Office of Chancellor files.


26 "500" Program Application Analysis, July 22, 1968, Office of the Chancellor files.


28 Robert Corcoran to Chancellor Peltason, September 26, 1968, Office of the Chancellor files.

29 Interview with John Lee Johnson, June 19, 1974.

30 Interview with Clarence Shelley, July 3, 1974.

31 Interview with Jack Peltason, June 17, 1974.


34 Charles E. Warwick to Joseph Smith, May 21, 1968, Office of Admissions and Records files.


36 Ed Sanford, memo to the files, June 6, 1968, Office of Admissions and Records files.

37 Corcoran to Peltason, September 26, 1968.
38 Interview with Ed Sanford, May 23, 1974.
40 Paul Doebel, memo to the files, May 15, 1968, Office of Student Personnel files.
41 Paul Doebel to Chancellor Peltason, August 7, 1968, Office of the Chancellor files.
42 Charles E. Warwick to Chancellor Peltason, August 8, 1968, Office of the Chancellor files.
CHAPTER FIVE

ORIENTATION WEEK AND THE SIT-IN

September 2 was Labor Day in 1968 but it was not a holiday for many Office of Student Personnel administrators. When Dean Shelden returned from vacation in August, she found a lack of coordination between OAR, financial aid, and housing. Working nights and Labor Day, her office managed to schedule orientation, including transportation from the railroad station, and coordinate as much of the SEOP effort as possible.¹

The special orientation workshop held September 3–8 was designed to provide opportunities for testing (ACT and placement), course selection, and general counseling. Scheduled the week before New Student Week, it hoped to avoid some of the chaos normally associated with the first week on campus. Another goal was to provide an opportunity for the new students to see that there were other blacks on campus. If they had arrived at the beginning of New Student Week, 500 blacks would have been relatively invisible among thirty thousand students.²

The workshop was run by BSA members, with SEOP staff serving in a supervisory role. The new students arrived scared and for good reason. They knew they were entering a traditionally white, elitist institution. Many did not have college backgrounds in their families; and many had not planned
to attend college at all. Instead of helping to make the transition to the University's foreign atmosphere as smooth as possible, some of the BSA advisers emphasized their blackness, told the new students how bad the University was, and separated whites from blacks. To add to the charged atmosphere already developing,

an edition of the BSA newspaper, DRUMS, distributed to the students during the week September 3-8 featured a front page editorial which, ignoring University initiative, claimed that the SEOP program was entered into reluctantly under BSA pressure in order to avoid 'the possibility of a Howard, Northwestern, or Columbia revolt.' This bit of questionable analysis preceded the editorialist's suggestion that logistical difficulties in processing applications had been deliberate.

Black mutual support was undoubtedly necessary for individual success, but the attitude of the BSA fanned the flames of black-white antagonism. The BSA, attempting to solidify its assumed position as the representative of SEOP students most of whom were black, enhanced its position by emphasizing the numerous administrative mistakes made by the University.

The new students began to arrive on September 2; about 515 approved students arrived sometime during the week to acclimate themselves to the strange environment. Despite the extraordinary efforts of the Office of Student Personnel, the orientation workshop was not the pleasant, relaxed experience it was meant to be.

Confusion reigned during the workshop week as all the unresolved problems regarding admission, financial aid, and
housing emerged. In addition to the 515 approved students, approximately one hundred unapproved applicants also appeared. Some of these applicants had not completed application papers, but many had been denied admission. A few from Philadelphia actually had their rejection letters with them; they had been encouraged by recruiters, Shelley's office, and "our" [Admissions?] office to come anyway in case fewer than 500 arrived. The BSA had sent welcome letters to many students on the applicant list, but they were not always careful to distinguish between the approved, denied, or incomplete applicants.  5

Robert Corcoran, Associate Director of OAR, had the responsibility of dealing with this group of unapproved students. Some of the students with incomplete applications had relinquished spaces at other universities on the basis of recruiters' statements. Twenty SEOPs were admitted after September 10, some of them from the incomplete application group.

The situation with financial aid was no better. Because of the problem in obtaining properly completed applications, many approved students had not been notified of their financial aid awards by the beginning of orientation week. As late as Friday, September 6, financial aid applications from more than two hundred students had not been received or properly completed. 6 Many of these students had come to the University on the strength of a recruiter's promise of a "free ride," some without any money in their pockets.
to buy even inexpensive incidentals. The uncertainty was aggravated by the news that each financial aid award would include a larger than anticipated long-term loan and some would include provision for part-time employment.

There were many unresolved problems with housing as well. During orientation all of the SEOP students were temporarily housed at the Illinois Street Residences (ISR). These dorms were quite new and well-equipped, but they were selected because of their proximity to the Illini Union where the SEOP students were fed. However, a large group did not have permanent housing to move to by September 7; many had not completed applications. Carroll Hubble, Manager of Housing Operations, went to ISR early in the week to settle housing assignments and managed to find housing for all. Unfortunately some of the assignments, because of the larger than expected number of SEOP students, were in temporary housing such as lounges. When the students saw their permanent assignments for the first time on Saturday, there was much dissatisfaction.

Temporary housing had been used by the University of Illinois for many years at the beginning of the fall semester. Each year many students with room assignments failed to register and to ensure full residence halls, the housing office over-assigned rooms.

Very few of the SEOPs were placed in temporary housing; however, another aspect of the housing situation
was a much more important problem. As mentioned ISR were fairly new and quite attractive dormitories, probably the most desirable on campus. Most of the permanent room assignments were elsewhere, and some were in the oldest dorms whose physical condition provided a stark contrast with ISR. Furthermore the new students had been shown housing brochures by recruiters which pictured only the best rooms. The net result was further evidence that the University was not meeting the students' expectations, that SEOP was being given second class treatment.

Because of the larger than expected SEOP enrollment, the use of temporary assignments for some of them could not be avoided. However, housing officials agree now that it would have been wiser to house the SEOP orientation in an older dormitory to avoid the unfortunate contrast cited previously.⁸

The move to permanent housing began on Saturday, September 7. An elaborate procedure had been designed to help the students move their luggage by University vehicles. There were even instructions on how to secure and tag luggage so that it would arrive safely at the correct dormitory.⁹

Grumblings about the inadequacy of many room assignments were heard immediately. Jean Hill, Assistant Dean of Women, and Carroll Hubble, Manager of Housing
Operations, talked with two girls early Saturday afternoon who were very unhappy about their transfer to Busey-Evans dormitories. About lunch time Robert Suter, Housing Business Manager, went to the Illini Union to see what the housing situation was. There he met informally with Clarence Shelley and David Addison, the president of BSA, who mentioned the dissatisfaction with overflow assignments and rooms in older dormitories. Talking privately Addison admitted that the University had a problem, but while addressing the group of blacks eating lunch at the Union a few minutes later, he was much more insistent that something had to be done about the housing immediately—by no later than 5 or 6 p.m. According to Suter, Addison "made no effort to assist in the identification and solution of specific problems but rather embarked on a long tirade degrading the University."11

Suter interpreted Addison's comments as an ultimatum to get something done by 5 p.m. that day. Returning to the Student Services Building, Suter called Arnold Strohkorb, the Director of Housing, to appraise him of the situation. Strohkorb arranged to meet the BSA officers at the Union at 5 p.m.

Since he had been Director of Housing for only one week and was not familiar with the housing arrangements made during the summer, Strohkorb asked Paul Doebel, the former Director of Housing, to join the 5 p.m. meeting.12
Strohkorb arrived first and met Shelley, who asked to talk with the BSA officers alone. After a brief meeting, Shelley and the officers emerged, said they were going to talk with the SEOP students, and asked Strohkorb and Doebel to wait. About one hour later, Shelley returned and indicated it would not be necessary to talk with the students. Instead the BSA officers were going to develop a list of specific housing complaints to give to Strohkorb by 2 p.m. the next day, Sunday, September 8.

The list of specific complaints did not materialize Sunday afternoon. Late that afternoon Karl Ijams, Assistant Director of Housing for Undergraduate Residence Halls, called Doebel to inform him that some SEOP girls had not moved out of their ISR rooms and that a few students with permanent assignments for those rooms had arrived to claim them. Doebel, Strohkorb, and Ijams, among others, agreed to meet at the Student Services Building after supper. As a result of this meeting, Shelley made contact with the dissident girls and arranged a meeting for later that evening.

The meeting with the girls at the ISR seminar room began constructively with Rosetta Ledbetter, a new student, expressing general areas of dissatisfaction to Doebel, Strohkorb, and Ijams. She objected to overflow housing and small, improperly maintained rooms in older dorms, saying that SEOP students needed good accommodations and study conditions to overcome disadvantaged backgrounds.
The constructive atmosphere of questions and answers evaporated when Yolanda Smith entered the meeting after about a half hour and immediately took charge. She emphasized hanging together; individual complaints could not be resolved unless the whole group was present. Her comments also included statements about the extent of racial discrimination blacks had experienced. She ended her tirade by demanding action then and there.

After a brief conference, the three administrators announced that the girls could stay in ISR that night and that individuals with complaints could meet with them the next day to resolve them. Yolanda Smith objected to this "white tactic to divide and conquer." The administrators then asked for a specific list of complaints to work with. The subsequent demands, signed by Yolanda Smith and Jerrie Smyly, defined "adequate housing" and listed which girls wanted singles, doubles, and triples and the desired roommates. The September 8 meeting ended with the agreement to meet again the next evening at 7 p.m. at ISR.

Because she was a central figure in the two ISR meetings, Yolanda Smith deserves further identification. She was a twenty-one year old theatre major new to the Urbana campus. In a group she was very dramatic and forceful, and it was her style to run away with the show when she had an audience. She was a transfer student from the Chicago Circle campus who arrived for the orientation
workshop without official approval for admission. She was admitted to the University before September 9.

The second ISR meeting began Monday, September 9, at 7 p.m., with Mary Harrison, Assistant Dean of Student Personnel, joining Doebel, Strohkorb, and Ijams. The nineteen girls were present plus one upperclassman to advise them on the adequacy of the rooms. Smith did not permit anyone else in the room.

Harrison and Ijams presented a list of twenty-four available spaces; nine were immediately rejected because they were in the older dorms. Soon Smith realized that many of the other rooms already had a resident, and the demand for black roommates could not be met. On discovering that there were not enough spaces to meet everyone’s needs, Yolanda Smith rejected all of the spaces. A partial solution was no solution at all. In a reportedly high-pitched emotional voice, she announced that the girls would claim the rooms they currently occupied in ISR as permanent assignments. Before the girls left the meeting, Doebel managed to inform them that they would have to vacate their ISR rooms by 2 p.m. the next day or be subject to disciplinary or other appropriate action by the University. As the administrators left ISR, they heard Yolanda Smith talking to a large group of black students gathered in another ISR room.

To the students, the inability of the housing office to find suitable rooms was further evidence of University
racism. Some of them had arrived on campus not knowing whether they had been admitted. A majority did not know how much financial aid they would receive, and those who did know discovered they were being asked to accept higher loans and even part-time jobs. From years of experience, the black students suspected University duplicity or lack of good faith. The move to overflow housing was not considered temporary by the blacks, who interpreted this as more evidence that SEOP was going to be a second class program.

The large group of black students gathered at ISR was understandably concerned with the turn of events. The attractive picture painted by the recruiters during the summer had turned bleak. All the high expectations were suddenly transformed into grim realities that appeared to be more racial discrimination. As a result, many of the new students decided to go to the BSA office at the Union to "lean" on BSA people to produce what they had promised.16

The BSA executive board had been meeting since 7 p.m. that evening. On hearing reports of the ISR meeting, the board adjourned to go to ISR. The new students and the board met between the Union and ISR and decided to return to the Union to discuss what to do. The group held informal discussions on the South Terrace of the Union until shortly before 9 p.m. when fate intervened: it started to rain. Everyone moved into the South Lounge
of the Union to continue discussions. The haunting question remains to this day whether anything would have occurred that night if the rain had not forced the group inside.

After the ISR meeting, the housing officials returned to their offices at the Student Services Building. Doebel spent about forty-five minutes talking with Dean Shelden and while there, rejected a demand from the black girls to remove the belongings of students permanently assigned ISR spaces still occupied by the dissident girls and to issue permanent keys. Doebel, who was the Associate Director of the Department of Plant and Services, also began to receive reports from the Union that a large group of black students had gathered there and that some whites had been attacked by blacks.

Sometime between 8:30 and 9:00, Doebel became worried about the reports from the Union and called high administrative officers about the situation. One of them, maybe John Briscoe, Vice Chancellor for Administrative Affairs, suggested getting together at the Student Services Building to be ready to act if necessary. The Chancellor and his staff were notified along with a host of other administrative officers; according to most estimates, about fifty administrators gathered on the fourth floor of the Student Services Building during the course of the evening.

The Chancellor had been in Kankakee that day, but because of the housing problem which emerged over the weekend,
he returned to Urbana earlier than expected, arriving around 7:30 p.m. Although he joined the group in the Student Services Building early in the evening, events at the Union around 9:00 p.m. did not appear threatening, and he was advised to leave. However, he received so many calls at home from the administrative group that he decided to return to the Student Services Building.\textsuperscript{21}

The group of black students in the Union, variously estimated between 200 and 400, was generally orderly for the first ninety minutes after they moved inside. With so large a group, there was bound to be noise. There was very little formal discussion; most of the time, the crowd milled around, played cards, talked, or snoozed. The crowd regrouped around 10:30 p.m. at the South Lounge. Robert McNabb, the night supervisor at the Union, tried to enter, but Steve Jackson, a black leader of whom more will be said later, prevented his entrance because he was white. After 10:30 p.m. the mood of the crowd was less peaceful. Dave Addison addressed the group around this time and said that the Project 500 students were guests of the University and should be treated accordingly. He urged the crowd to unite to secure their demands and to sit in the Union until the Chancellor met them. Steve Jackson also spoke but in a much more heated and emotional tone, calling the whites "hunkies."\textsuperscript{22}
By 11:00 p.m. there were further reports of property theft and damage in the Union. Candy was pilfered from the candy counter at the main desk, and food was stolen from the Snack Bar in the downstairs food service area.\textsuperscript{23}

The exact timing of events during this part of the evening is somewhat uncertain, but the sequence is relatively clear. Sometime before 10 p.m., Dave Addison, speaking for the BSA, decided that the only person who could solve the grievances of the new students was the Chancellor. The new students were pressuring the BSA to produce what had been promised, but the BSA did not see the problem as theirs as much as the University's. Because the Chancellor was seen as the program, because he made the May 2 commitment unilaterally, the BSA passed on the responsibility for problem solving to him.

Jackson called Joseph Smith, a staff associate in the Chancellor's Office and a black, before 10 p.m. to demand that the Chancellor come to the Union. Smith was still at home at the time and was unaware that the Chancellor had returned from Kankakee. Shortly afterward, Lucius Barker, Assistant Chancellor and also a black, called Smith from the Student Services Building and asked him to join the group of administrators there. Smith passed on Addison's demand that the Chancellor come to the Union.

The group of administrators assembled in the Student Services Building decided there would be no effort to remove
the students as long as the gathering was peaceful. Around 10:30 p.m., William K. Williams, Staff Associate to the President, and Joseph Smith went to the Union to assess the situation and discovered most of the students lying on the floor or curled up in chairs—anything but hostile. The students expressed willingness to wait for the Chancellor who was expected to arrive shortly.24

Clarence Shelley had visited both the Union and the Student Services Building by about 10 p.m. He had decided that nothing was going to happen and had gone home. By 11 p.m. the situation in the Union seemed to be getting explosive, and the administrators asked Shelley to return to campus to report his impressions of the conditions. Shelley complied and reported the group's desire to hear from the Chancellor.

There was general agreement among the administrators gathered in the Student Services Building that the Chancellor should not go to the Union. Although he indicated a willingness to go, he asked for advice, and the advice he received was not to go. There were many different reasons given for the advice: (1) the Chancellor would not have been in a position to satisfy demands, and if he could not deliver, his presence would increase frustration; (2) there was the possibility of physical as well as verbal abuse (there was an open and amplified telephone line between the Student Services Building and the Union main desk areas, through which
the administrators could hear the crowd noise); and (3) if there was any trouble in the Union, it would be better to hold the Chancellor in reserve to serve as a reconciler the next day.  

There was also general agreement that someone should go to the Union to try to appease the crowd. Dean of Students Stanton Millet volunteered to go. Although he did not play a central role in the summer activities, having delegated responsibility to the Office of Student Personnel, he was responsible for the students after they arrived on campus. A delegation formed with Arnold Strohkopf, Paul Doebel, William Williams, Joseph Smith, and Lucius Barker included (Shelley also went along but he did not participate in the subsequent meetings). A few days later, Barker wrote: "Quite candidly, I myself would not have gone to the Union under the situation as it was described to me except I felt that as Assistant Chancellor—and I did not think the Chancellor should go—someone from his immediate staff should."  

The delegation proceeded directly to the BSA office on the second floor, south, of the Union. At first Addison kept only BSA officers in the room and began to explain the problem areas. According to Paul Doebel, Addison listed unsatisfactory housing, too much loan and work in financial aid awards, the slowness and delays in admitting students, and the unsatisfactory relations between the BSA and the Dean of Students. Addison charged that Dean Millet had denied
adequate financial support for BSA and had insisted on treating it like any other student organization; the BSA felt it should be treated as a University agency because it was charged with responsibility for SEOP.28

The atmosphere in the BSA office was charged while Addison was enumerating the grievances (he had refused to shake hands with Millet), but it became hostile when Steve Jackson and some of his friends entered the room. Jackson was a newly admitted student from North Champaign, who, according to John Lee Johnson, assumed a leadership position September 9 because he was the only recognized leader from the local community who was present.29 Jackson took charge of the meeting from Addison and proceeded to berate and humiliate the administrators present in crude and abusive language.30 There were indications that Jackson had been drinking.

When Jackson finished his tirade, the six administrators were "invited" to speak with the students downstairs. The journey to the South Lounge and the meeting there convinced five of the administrators that the situation was highly emotional and that the safety of persons and property was questionable. William K. Williams was the exception—he moved freely around the Union from time to time and until 12:30 a.m. he didn't experience anything personally threatening, although the group was emotionally aroused and verbally aggressive.31 Williams' different perception may be
explained by the fact that he had been involved in more serious racial conflicts previously and was accustomed to aggressive verbal behavior.

The unsettled atmosphere was further upset when the fire alarm went off at 11:58 p.m. as the delegation was heading for the South Lounge. Assuming correctly that it was a false alarm, the Student Services Building group advised Earl Finder, the Director of the Union, to intercept the firemen and not to let them into the building. The meeting in the South Lounge lasted about forty minutes. Steve Jackson completely dominated proceedings. Dean Millet attempted to address the crowd first, about dorm hours being waived for the girls that evening and about room assignments. He was interrupted frequently by Jackson who derided Millet and prevented him from completing a sentence. Others in the crowd, including Yolanda Smith, supported Jackson. Doebel followed Millet to the speaker's table and, in giving reasons instead of answers, suffered the same fate as Millet.

The noisy and interruptive tactics used by Jackson were not characteristic of the group as a whole. While Millet and Doebel tried to speak, Joseph Smith moved around the crowd and found many students tuned out, just watching, or paying no attention to the hysteria of a few. Lucius Barker reached a similar conclusion: "While a good number of persons in the Lounge seemed genuinely concerned, there were just enough others scattered throughout the crowd whose
shouting and words kept the atmosphere most tense."³⁵

With the meeting about to break up (and with some of the administrators fearful for their personal safety), Barker asked Addison for a list of specific grievances. Addison told him to look in the next day's Chicago Sun Times. Shortly thereafter Gertrude King, a BSA officer, gave Strohkorb a deck of complaint cards, the same deck expected on Sunday, September 8.

The six administrators returned to the Student Services Building around 12:45 a.m. Shelley agreed with his assistant, John Sullivan, that the kids in Project 500 had no intention of doing anything, so he went home.³⁶

Lucius Barker returned from the Union with three conclusions quite different from Shelley's:

(1) there was a clear and present danger to the safety of persons and damage to property;
(2) no rational or any other kind of discussion was possible under these circumstances; and
(3) it was unsafe for the Chancellor to go into this situation.³⁷

During the meeting in the South Lounge, nothing was said by any administrator to support the idea that the Chancellor might still come. The same was true of the meeting in the BSA office when first Addison and then Jackson completely dominated the conversation.

Nor was there any effort to get the black students out of the Union. Until midnight, the Union was open, and students were free to assemble there peacefully. However, the Union closed at 12 p.m. and all doors were
locked to people trying to get in. McNabb tried to enter the South Lounge to announce closing time but was advised to stay out. He considered using the public address system but decided that a voice from the ceiling might cause panic or violence and do more harm than good.\textsuperscript{38} No one recalls asking the students to leave or giving a warning about being in violation of University regulations during the meeting with the delegation of administrators.

Through the course of the evening, one of the major concerns of the Night Supervisor of the Union, Bob McNabb, and the Student Services Building group was the safety of the Illini Union guests. There are guest rooms on the fourth floor of Union North and on the third and fourth floors of Union South, directly above the South Lounge and BSA office. Sometime around 11:30 p.m., McNabb had requested six policemen from the University Police Department, two for each of the guest room floors. As they arrived, McNabb was questioned about their purpose in the Union by Steve Jackson. McNabb explained where they would be and where, in fact, they remained until the South Lounge was cleared later.\textsuperscript{39}

There turned out to be good reason to fear for the safety of Union guests and property, for trouble occurred very soon after the delegation of administrators left the Union. The mood of the crowd changed after the administrators left,\textsuperscript{40} perhaps because of the frustration experienced when
the Chancellor did not come, or perhaps because tempers and irritability had built up as the evening progressed. The relative importance of the various explanations for the mood change is not clear. Suffice it to say that the mood became ugly, explosive, and evident in damage done to Union property.

Some of the damage occurred around the main desk. When the Union closed at midnight, a vinyl folding door was closed around the main desk area and prevented access to it. Around 12:45 the vinyl door was slashed, and for the remainder of the evening, people reached through the cut to take candy and magazines or to try to obtain cigarettes.

A short time later, Bob McNabb, who was sitting in a small office behind the main desk, heard glass breaking in the Southwest (President's) and West Lounges. These lounges are located about eighty-five feet from the west entrance to the South Lounge where most of the students were gathered (see the floor plan of the Union in Appendix D). McNabb went immediately to the two lounges, but most of the damage to the furniture, lamps, chandeliers, and pictures of past University of Illinois presidents had already been done. The picture of President Henry received special attention: the glass was broken and "Black Power" was scrawled on his forehead. McNabb did see one man throw a chair into a chandelier and rock the chandelier into the
ceiling. As he left, the same man told McNabb that "We didn't tear up the television because we want to watch it tomorrow night." Later McNabb was able to identify the man as Jon Bowman, a local black who was not a University student.

The fact that Bowman was not a student lends credence to the thought that all the people who committed the destruction in the Southwest and West Lounges were not students. McNabb did not know any of them—he identified Bowman later from photographs provided by the Security Office. If they were local people, their identities have not been revealed. Only a few (five or six?) individuals participated in the destruction of the two lounges, but while everyone assumes they were local blacks, not in SEOP, no one has been able to substantiate the assumption.

That anyone was able to get into the Southwest or West Lounge is perhaps as fateful as the coming of rain earlier. When the Union closed for the night, both lounges were locked. The janitors cleaned them then, but because of the noise in the corridor outside (the administrators, BSA officers, and Jackson crowd were coming downstairs at about this time), the janitors were afraid to leave by the normal exits. They left their equipment in the lounges and climbed out a back window. Later between 12:30 and 12:45, they returned to the lounges to get their equipment. No one was around as they unlocked the doors and entered, but as they were leaving, a group of blacks pushed by them
into the lounges. The janitors left the area as fast as they could.⁴²

There was some destruction in the South Lounge as well but it was considerably less serious than in the other lounges. Some light chairs were stripped of their arms and legs and many standing ash trays were dismantled ostensibly so that the stems could be used as clubs. John Sullivan, Shelley's assistant, was the only witness, and he contends that only nine or ten people were involved and all were not in SEOP.⁴³ Sullivan reported that many SEOP students questioned the use of violence and expressed doubts about using such means to obtain answers.

Thus after the outbreak of destruction, most of which occurred between 12:45 and 1:15, two groups formed within the South Lounge. The majority of students were merely sitting around or lying on cushions spread on the floor. Another group was more prone to violence, and they walked around with the metal rods from ash trays or pieces of furniture for weapons. "The general deterioration of the situation after 2 a.m. did not appear to be the result of the activities of any one or two people but a growing aggressiveness on the part of a number of those on the outside of the group."⁴⁴

Given the fact that nothing was happening, why didn't many of the students leave the Union? They stayed for a variety of reasons. Some were half asleep, and some
girls were afraid to leave because they didn't know if they could get in their dorms after hours. Furthermore the students still believed that the Chancellor was coming to announce a decision, and they wanted to be there to hear it. Above all the students believed that leaving would show a lack of unity, a prized commodity in the black community in its relationship with white society. 45

Nevertheless some SEOPs were ready to leave the Union around 2 p.m. However, a rumor started that there were policemen outside with clubs and dogs. One need only remember Bull Connor and Selma, Alabama, in the early 1960s to imagine the fear black people held about police dogs.

No substantiation of the police dog story was discovered during the course of this investigation. The Urbana Police Department had one dog at the time and it is thought that the policeman handling the dog may have pulled into the driveway at the north end of the Union, with the dog in the car, simply because he was curious about what was happening in the Union. 46 Joseph Smith says he did not see any police dogs all evening, and he was around the Union periodically. In fact he even proposed a walk around the Union with the black students to demonstrate that there were no dogs, but his suggestion was not accepted.

Lacking any evidence of the presence of dogs, the most logical conclusion is that some black leaders used the rumor to keep everyone together in the Union. In this way,
the blacks could remain unified and justify their being in the Union.

Although the delegation of administrators returned to the Student Services Building around 12:45 a.m. undoubtedly with strong feelings about the wisdom of letting the students remain in the Union, the final decision to remove all was made shortly before 2 a.m. The Chancellor had discussed the situation with many of the assembled administrators and with Deans of some colleges before he notified President Henry, who was in Chicago, of the decision to remove the students. Preparations were begun to assemble a police force to make the arrests.

One incident occurred between 2:10 and 2:30 which further justified the decision to empty the Union. At 2:11 a BSA officer called the University police "and stated that if the Union didn't get the Canteen opened to feed these people, that they would tear this place apart." At about the same time, Mary Alexander, a BSA officer, asked John Corker, Assistant Director of the Union, if the vending room could be opened. Corker and Finder asked if Addison could guarantee that there would be no damage in the vending room. When no guarantee was forthcoming, the request was denied. The threat to break up the Union was the last straw, and plans to arrest and remove the students proceeded accordingly.

With the removal decision having been made, William K. Williams and Joseph Smith decided to return to the Union
for one last effort to get the students to leave voluntarily. They had intended to make a general announcement, but after seeing the roving band with clubs and sensing the ugly mood, they tried to persuade individuals to leave. Charles Quick, a Professor of Law and a black, arrived about this time, and he tried to convince people to leave. He went to the BSA office and convinced Addison to help get the girls in the South Lounge ready to return to their dorms. On the way to the Lounge, Quick was threatened with bodily harm by five or six persons for "interfering with their thing." Addison tried to get the girls together, but the police arrived before they could get out. No one was allowed to leave peacefully, all were arrested.

By 2:45 a.m. ninety police officers (University, Champaign, Urbana, State, and Sheriff's deputies) received instructions about emptying the lounge. They were carefully briefed about their conduct and deportment. When the decision to remove the students had been made, there was much concern about avoiding physical violence and harm during the arrest.

The police moved into the Union at 3:14 a.m. and did not encounter any physical resistance. The South Lounge was quickly sealed off, and the students were removed one-by-one, women first, to waiting trucks. There was no police brutality observed, nor did the police have to drag or pull any students. The police, especially one black officer,
were the targets of much verbal abuse, including epithets and obscenities.

It took about one and one-half hours to remove 244 people from the South Lounge. Many were taken to local jails, but the overflow was held in the West Great Hall of Memorial Stadium. Most of those arrested were new students (218), three were transfers from Chicago Circle (including Yolanda Smith), and nineteen were continuing students. The remaining four were not students. All were charged with mob action which carried a maximum penalty of thirty days and a $500 fine. Steve Jackson, because of loud and obscene language, was also charged with disorderly conduct. About one week later, twelve more non-students, all local blacks, were arrested and charged with mob action. They had been removed from the Union with the others but had jumped from the trucks on the way to Memorial Stadium.

Was it necessary to arrest the students? On one hand, Clarence Shelley (who had gone home around 12:30 a.m.) says "no." After all the girls were preparing to leave when the police arrived and others had to be awakened to be arrested. On the other hand, Joseph Smith (who was there at the time) does not believe that the group was preparing to disperse. One of the major themes running through the evening was the black need for unity, and leaving voluntarily around 3 a.m. would have been counter to this dominant force.
Whether it was necessary to arrest everyone depends on each individual's subjective perception of the situation. These were bound to vary, as they depend on whether one believed that the students were ready to leave on their own.

There is more agreement that the students should not have been allowed to remain in the Union. With hostility increasing, with irritation more likely because people were tired, the chance for further violence and perhaps personal danger to the Union guests was believed close at hand. Significant damage had already been committed and there was legitimate reason to believe that further damage was likely. If there had been no damage, it is possible that the students would have been allowed to sleep in the Union overnight.56

These fears about the dangers posed by students remaining in the Union were not unrealistic, especially in light of future happenings. One has only to remember that, in April 1968, black students occupied Willard Straight Hall, the student union at Cornell University, drove out the guests staying there, armed themselves heavily, and in the process threatened the safety of anyone near the building. Whether a similar occurrence was likely at Illinois is unanswerable; the fear of such a happening existed, and action was taken to prevent it.
C. NEWSPAPERS

Champaign-Urbana (Illinois) **Courier**, 10 September - 30 September 1968.


**Chicago Tribune**, 11 September - 15 September 1968.


**St. Louis Post-Dispatch**, 10 September - 11 September 1968.

D. PUBLICATIONS


E. UNPUBLISHED PAPERS AND TAPES


Loeb, Jane, "Long-Term Retention, Performance, and Graduation of Disadvantaged College Students in an Educational Opportunities Program, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois, circa 1972."
CHAPTER FIVE FOOTNOTES

1 Interview with Miriam Shelden, July 18, 1973.
2 Interview with Clarence Shelley, July 3, 1974.
3 Interview with Miriam Shelden, July 18, 1973.
4 David Eisenman, untitled and unpublished paper, n.d.
5 Unsigned memo, n.d., Office of the Chancellor files.
7 Paul Doebel, memo to the files, May 15, 1968.
10 Interview with Carroll Hubble, May 30, 1974.
12 After September 1, 1968, Paul Doebel became the Associate Director of Plant and Services.
15 Interview with Paul Doebel, May 28, 1974.
18 Interview with Jack Peltason, June 17, 1974.
19 Statement of Paul Doebel, September 19, 1968.
21 Interview with Jack Peltason, June 17, 1974.
23 In the Matter of David N. Addison, December 16, 1968.
25 Interview with Joseph Smith, May 20, 1974.
27 Statement of Paul Doebel, September 19, 1968.
29 Interview with John Lee Johnson, June 19, 1974.
34 Statement of Joseph Smith, September 20, 1968.


Interview with Robert McNabb, June 6, 1974.


Statement of John Sullivan, September 19, 1968


Interview with Jack Peltason, June 17, 1974.


Ibid.

In the Matter of David N. Addison, December 16, 1968.

Statements of Paul Doebel and Robert McNabb, September 19, 1968.


Interview with Clarence Shelley, July 3, 1974.

Interview with Joseph Smith, May 20, 1974.
CHAPTER SIX
THE AFTERMATH

It would be pleasing to conclude the narrative by reporting that all civil charges were dropped, that there were no campus disciplinary proceedings, and that all the project students proceeded normally to graduation. Unfortunately this fairy tale ending is not applicable to the aftermath of the Illini Union sit-in. There were negative outcomes. Certainly the incident did not promote either a ground swell of support for SEOP among the white community or the formation of amicable black-white relationships. All black students at the University were forced to become more black because of their racial association with the sit-in participants.

All the black students arrested on September 10, 1968, were charged with mob action, except for Steve Jackson who was charged with disorderly conduct. These students had to meet the challenge of a stiff academic program in a foreign environment with court charges pending. The charges were not brought to trial until June 1970, two academic years after the incident occurred. At that time the cases were thrown out, possibly because of inadequate prosecution.¹

According to Jack W. Metzger, Urbana-Champaign Campus Legal Counsel, the University cooperated fully with Lawrence
E. Johnson, State's Attorney of Champaign County. As early as February 27, 1969, Metzger informed Johnson that the University favored the prosecution of only thirty-one of the people arrested in the Illini Union on September 10. The Chancellor reiterated this view publicly in a statement issued on April 10, 1969, which urged "that charges should be dismissed against those students for whom there is no information showing any involvement in the activities of that evening other than the fact that they were present at the time of arrest."²

The State's Attorney decided to prosecute everyone anyway, but despite Metzger's letters of July 29, 1969, and October 14, 1969, urging disposition of the cases, Johnson did not bring the cases to trial until June, 1970. The charges were thrown out by Judge Sarah Lumpp on June 8, 1970, because they were inadequately drawn.

The SEOP students also had to endure University discipline proceedings through the fall semester. All of the cases were referred to Subcommittee A on Undergraduate Student Discipline which was invested with the power of dismissal from the University. Two hundred thirty-nine cases were heard beginning October 10, 1968 and ending four months later. The hearings were lengthy and burdened with contradictory testimony. To resolve the latter problem and in the interest of fairness to the students, Subcommittee A changed its proceedings in mid-stream to incorporate a modified adversary system. By January 6, 1969, Subcommittee
A reported one conduct probation (Steve Jackson), 203 reprimands of record (an intra-University warning which does not appear on a student's transcript in the event of graduation or transfer), twenty-nine reprimands of record in process, one no action, and five cases pending. The actual penalties assessed were exceedingly lenient, according to many enraged citizens of Illinois who expected expulsion, but the possible penalties involved added a psychological dimension with which the accused students had to live during those four months.

In addition to and separate from the Subcommittee A proceedings, the College of Law convened its own Discipline Committee to hear the charges against David Addison, the only student involved who was enrolled in a graduate professional program. After careful deliberation, the Committee voted a reprimand not of record, with one member dissenting. The penalty given was the least serious one available next to dismissal of the charges. What was remarkable about the Discipline Committee was the thoroughness of its deliberations and its report. The latter contains findings and conclusions of fact which, for the most part, support and supplement the statements of administrators compiled in the Report of Events.

But the sit-in did not ruin SEOP and there were some positive outcomes. For one thing, the incident and the arrests united the group as nothing else could. Even more importantly, with civil and campus charges hanging over his head, each student was forced to reassess why he was in
college. Under the circumstances, the commitment to obtaining a college education had to be stronger as a result of the arrests.\(^5\)

The incident also provided an opportunity to vent the frustrations which had built up during orientation week. They were very real frustrations, and they needed to be relieved. If they had been bottled up longer, the explosion might have been more serious than the actual demonstration, according to John Lee Johnson.\(^6\)

The large volume of mail sent to the Chancellor in the weeks after the sit-in indicates that the public wanted and expected many of the participants to be expelled from the University. Thus one of the happiest results of the disciplinary proceedings was the continued eligibility of all those arrested to remain in school. Nearly seventeen percent of the 502 disadvantaged freshmen who entered the University in the fall of 1968 graduated in four years, and a total of 32.1% earned their degrees by the end of ten semesters.\(^7\) While these figures are substantially less than similar ones for non-SEOPs who matriculated at the same time, they do represent 161 black people who would not have graduated from the University of Illinois without SEOP. Some of the remaining 341 students are still working on their degrees, having been delayed because of academic and/or financial difficulties. Others who have dropped out with no intention of returning have at least been exposed to a college education.
There is no question that the days following the sit-in were tense ones. The black students who were arrested were justifiably concerned whether they would be expelled; one student took the unusual step of registering at another university as well as at the University of Illinois, pending clarification of her status at Urbana.

High level administrators, especially Chancellor Peltason, were inundated by mail, most of it demanding the expulsion of the black students. They were forced to walk a narrow line between their concern for fairness to the students and their need to generate public support for a program under fire.

Most of all, the incident created a tenseness within the university community. The lengthy disciplinary proceedings tended to polarize opinions, especially between black and white but also between campus radicals and conservatives. The continuing controversy about the penalties to be assessed added fuel to an atmosphere already tense because of the anti-war protests.
CHAPTER SIX FOOTNOTES

1 Press Release from the Office of Public Information, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, June 9, 1970.


3 Professor Wendell E. Miller, Chairman, Subcommittee A on Undergraduate Student Discipline, to Dean John Cribbet, Chairman, Senate Committee on Student Discipline, January 6, 1969.

4 See In the Matter of David N. Addison, December 16, 1968.

5 Interview with Clarence Shelley, July 3, 1974.

6 Interview with John Lee Johnson, June 19, 1974.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SOME POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS

What happened in September 1968 cannot be explained in one paragraph or in one chapter. The factors which affected each other are too numerous and too complex to determine the relative importance of each definitively. Explanations vary from person to person depending on one's perspective and how one was involved with SEOP in 1968. But when one examines the various explanations, one finds that the basic explanation underlying the events leading up to and including the sit-in was the lack of clear and complete communication among the actors. Where there was some communication and joint action, it was often accomplished without thorough examination of the issues.

It is human nature for an individual, a group, or an organization to be reluctant to accept responsibility for error, especially in a crisis situation. Thus it is no surprise that neither the BSA nor the administration publicly accepted blame for the incident. In its policy statement issued on September 11, 1968, the BSA placed the burden of blame on the administration:

Despite constant and insistent requests that Chancellor Peltason meet with them to discuss these grievances, he stubbornly refused to do so. The attitude of apathy and arrogance by the University of Illinois administration in the
face of innumerable demonstrations of bad faith and willful failure to live up to its commitments to students in the "500" project was the fundamental factor sparking the events.¹

Whether the Chancellor should have met with the black students on September 9 is a question we will discuss shortly. Suffice it to say here that the administration erred at various points and contributed to some misunderstandings. However, the BSA statement fails to mention the culpability of many recruiters who misrepresented what they were authorized to tell applicants. Whether the misrepresentation was intentional or not cannot be determined. Similarly one cannot judge whether the exaggeration resulted from the recruiters' presentations or from the perceptions of the applicant.

It has been suggested that OAR should have monitored more closely what the recruiters said to the applicants. This makes sense, but how could it have been accomplished? Written statements could have been used, but the written word is usually dry, factual, and unread. Better telephone contact with the recruiters would have provided a useful supplement to the training sessions held in June.

Better follow-up procedures by the recruiters would have helped, both in getting the truth to the applicant and in providing the University with more accurate information about how many SEOPs were planning to come. The recruiters helped the students complete the initial application forms, but they were not around to help fill out all the additional
paperwork which the initial application generated. This partly explains why the housing office had difficulty getting completed room applications.

The primary interest of the recruiters was to convince other black students to come. Some recruiters were more enthusiastic about their job than others; they were not reluctant to paint a positive picture of the University of Illinois program in order to enhance their positions.

Although the housing of nineteen black girls was the event which precipitated the sit-in, it was not the major source of frustration among the blacks. That honor fell to financial aid and the lack thereof.

The most serious matter involved a misunderstanding as to available financial aid. Some students indicated that they were under the impression that there would be sufficient grants to the end that their borrowing would be limited to a minimum, that they would be free to devote full time to their studies, and that it would not be necessary to undertake outside work.

The black student belief in a financial aid award with only a small loan and no job was only partly caused by recruiter exaggeration. While there is nothing in the May 2 agreement (see Appendix C) or in a subsequent memo from Chancellor Peltason to Dave Addison which suggests any specific promises about financial aid packaging, some University administrators promoted the idea that the loan would not exceed $470. This was stated more as a belief, a hope, a goal—not as a promise to the students themselves. More than a few times Charles Warwick, Associate Director of
Admissions and Records, mentioned $470 as the expected loan. When he returned from Chicago with the substantially increased HEW grant, he even expressed hope that the maximum loan would not exceed $300.\textsuperscript{6} It is very likely that the hope for a small loan escalated into a promise in the minds of the black students. They were on campus when the available funding made a low loan a distinct and expressed possibility, but they were scattered when the financial problem created by non-residents became evident.

The Chancellor certainly did not commit the University to a specific loan figure on May 2 because, as he admits, he didn't know enough about financial aid to say anything definite. He probably did not make clear to the BSA that the University would try to obtain sufficient funds but that they were not assured at the time. As a result the students probably formalized in their minds shortly after May 2 that sufficient financial aid was available and committed.\textsuperscript{7} The low loan-no work story was so dominant that the Director of SEOP wrote to the Chancellor on September 5: "...when the BSA recruiters went out to identify students, they did so I am told with the understanding that no student in the project would have to work during the first year."\textsuperscript{8}

The best conclusion that can be drawn is that the University did not make any specific commitments about financial aid packaging, but it did express a strong hope that the loans would be low and jobs avoided. As the hope was
translated by the black students into a promise, the University passively supported the change by not specifically denying it. Unfortunately the University was not in a position to make specific statements in August because there was substantial uncertainty about how many new SEOPS would matriculate and need financial aid.

The lack of clear and complete communication is quite evident in the recruiting process. The University did not clarify the situation regarding financial aid or monitor what the recruiters told the applicants. Similarly, the BSA did not maintain control over its recruiters. As a result, misunderstandings and misperceptions were formed during the summer which led to uncompromisable positions in September. The BSA charged lack of good faith and the administration cried misunderstanding.

The new students who did come were quite poor. Of the 565, 426 qualified for Educational Opportunity Grants, for which only the most needy are eligible. Despite their common need for financial assistance, the incoming students were by no means homogeneous. The majority came from large cities or urban environments, and these students were wise to the ways of the world. A small group came from rural backgrounds such as Holmes County, Mississippi, with a limited range of experiences. The latter group, being somewhat naive and certainly apprehensive about coming to a traditionally white university were especially susceptible to appeals for unity of the blacks.
And there were appeals for unity, many of them, as mentioned earlier. Because of their mind set, the new students did not realize that they were pawns in a leadership struggle between the BSA and the local black community. Joseph Smith, Staff Associate in the Chancellor's office, believed "that most of the students who were demonstrating—especially the new students—did not realize for what they were being manipulated by their leaders, and were appalled by the destruction wrought by the violent ones."

The black competition for leadership in Champaign-Urbana is an historical one. The local black community, most of which is located in the north end of the cities, had always viewed the University as part of its "turf." It believed that the University had an obligation to provide programs which would benefit the North End. Thus when the BSA was organized, the local black leaders encouraged the election of officers sympathetic to the North End.

The struggle to make the BSA responsive to local community influences continued through the period under review. We have already mentioned that John Lee Johnson was an important force in the discussions which resulted in the May 2 agreement. He was also instrumental in the provision for a large number of local students in the 500. During the summer, John Lee Johnson and others continued to press for BSA policies which would benefit the North End. However,
the BSA began to show indications of a predominant university orientation. Obtaining a black students center took precedence over opening University facilities to North End people. The competition for dominance, and thus leadership, flared up before September 9.

There is another dimension to the struggle for dominance and leadership of the BSA. As the theory goes, the University was part of the turf of the local blacks, and they resented the influx of other blacks into their domain. The North End blacks naturally attempted to reassert their traditional control of University territory. 12

The black man assumed leadership in those days by challenging the white man and even showing a willingness to resort to violence of some form. Both Dave Addison and Steve Jackson challenged the white authority of the University. Both appealed to the crowd through aggressive postures, although Jackson was also hostile and crude; some of the initial damage may have been done by some of Jackson's cronies demonstrating that they were tough and should be the leaders. 13 Addison was much more rational, but he too adopted a more aggressive attitude when talking with the new students (see page 58). According to Dean Shelden, Addison was a man torn apart by the whole affair. He was a twenty-eight year old second-year law student who did not want to jeopardize a law career, but he was forced
to appear aggressive and militant to retain leadership. Undoubtedly Addison proposed the Chancellor's visit on September 9 not only to get the monkey off the back of the BSA, but also to gain stature among the new students by proving that he could produce the Chancellor. The new students, who were scared, confused, and unaware, were used as pawns in the power struggle between Addison and Jackson. Many students so manipulated did not realize that the affair was getting serious until the momentum picked up as everyone became tired, irritable, and hungry.

If one accepts that there was competition for leadership among the blacks, as this writer does, it is a natural, though not inevitable, corollary that the black leadership did not really want to resolve the issues on September 9-10. To be a force to be reckoned with on campus, the blacks had to become a cohesive and united group. Not all of the students had personal grievances, and if the other grievances were settled quickly, a chance to unite the group would be lost. According to one observer, the black leadership, understanding the need for unity, "kept the pot boiling" in order to foster a cohesive group and in the process gain stature in the eyes of the new students.

This view, if carried to the extreme, assumes that the University was not dealing with rational people who
were willing to discuss the issues and arrive at an agreeable compromise. After 1 a.m. on September 10, the group was probably not rational; emotion ruled over intellect at that point.

What we have, therefore, is another block against effective communication. The competition for leadership among the black students hampered constructive interaction within that group. Additionally the inability of the black leaders to agree among themselves prevented any unified discussion of the issues with administrators. The idea that the black leadership "kept the pot boiling" on September 9-10 is tangential to the main problem. The black leaders were unable to resolve the issues because they could not communicate with each other or with University administrators.

There is evidence that the black students and leadership would have been receptive to a visit from the Chancellor earlier in the evening. The reasons why the administrators assembled in the Student Services Building advised the Chancellor not to go to the Union have already been mentioned. These reasons either express fear for the Chancellor's safety or suggest the impropriety of the administration operating under duress. They do not reflect the views of the black students.

A statement by Dave Eisenman in the Daily Illini reflects the mood of the blacks as well as any:
What has been hard to convey is the heightened emotional climate which existed among the Blacks Monday night. They had become convinced they were being given the classical runaround. They were unwilling to listen to anything less than an immediate settlement. Their premise was that after all else failed, the Chancellor could still produce what they wanted.17

Eisenman's words are overstated. Since the gathering was rational through the early parts of the evening, there is no evidence that the blacks wanted only a solution when they asked the Chancellor to visit. The blacks perceived him as the only one with the power to change and rectify grievances. They did not really expect immediate resolution of all problems that night, but they wanted to see the Chancellor as an indication of good faith.18 The Chancellor represented the University commitment to the blacks, and when he did not appear, the blacks felt that they did not have a valid agreement. The Chancellor could not have resolved the specific problems by going to the Union, but if the blacks wanted reassurance, as many observers believe, his presence would have reinforced his commitment to SEOP and defused the momentum which culminated in physical damage and arrests.19 And at least in the early parts of the demonstration, until about 11 p.m., it was physically safe for the Chancellor to come to the Union, according to Bob McNabb who was in the Union during the entire event.20

When the Chancellor failed to come to the Union or to make any personal attempts to rectify the problems, he
continued to block the lines of communication between the black students and the white administration. Had there been some indication that "the man" knew about the problems and was trying to resolve them, the frustration of the blacks probably would not have accumulated to the point of explosion. Most of the students wanted reassurance; their leaders would have experienced difficulty "keeping the pot boiling" if the Chancellor had made a personal and substantial effort to unravel the misunderstandings. As it was, administrators like Paul Doebele, Arnold Strohkorb, and Stanton Millet--people who had earlier demonstrated an inability to resolve the problems--went to the Union as the Chancellor's emissaries. Because of their past ineffective relationship with the black students, there was no way that these administrators could communicate the Chancellor's concern for Project 500 students.

The Chancellor could not have settled the grievances on September 9 for three reasons. First they were too complicated to be resolved by executive fiat. Saying that they would be resolved would not solve everything. Secondly the Chancellor was not fully aware of the problems. He had heard about the housing problem over the preceding weekend but not about the financial aid problem until September 9. 21 And thirdly the seeds of the problems were sown during the summer as the bureaucracy attempted to adjust to different demands.
It is customary in our society to blame all our problems on the faceless, impersonal bureaucracy. Any university contains many elements characteristic of a bureaucracy such as a formal hierarchy, formal channels of communication, and formal policies, rules, and lines of authority. These elements are most obvious in the people-processing activities of the university; as used in this paper, bureaucracy refers to the people-processing functions which are often the bane of a student’s university experience.

The administrative bureaucracy of the University of Illinois did not perform as well as it should have in the summer of 1968. For one thing, not everyone expected the black recruiters to be as successful as they were. Through interviewing black students in the Union before the arrests were made, Dave Eisenman learned that they thought that the University had only expected about four hundred blacks. However, the minutes of a luncheon attended by assistant directors of various administrative offices on August 27 indicate that 450 were anticipated for the special orientation week. Robert Eubanks, then the BSA faculty adviser, believes that the University took the recruiting lightly, expected many “no-shows,” but honestly planned for five hundred students and was surprised when 565 arrived.

There is an unresolved question whether the housing office retained the 500 reserved spaces into orientation week. Arnold Strohkorb, in his statement for the
Report of Events compiled by the Security Office, wrote that Paul Doebel told the nineteen girls during the first ISR meeting, on September 8, that eighty spaces were released on August 23 because only 420 were enrolled in the program at that time. All the preparations for SEOP were expected to be completed by that date. There is nothing to substantiate Stroshkorb's statement. Paul Doebel, Carroll Hubble, and Clarence Shelley, in interviews, do not remember any reserved spaces being released and express doubt that any were released. Robert Suter, in a telephone conversation, expressed similar sentiments.

If the University had been more optimistic about the recruiters' success, there is no guarantee that the administrative procedures and bureaucracies could have handled the work demand. The admissions, financial aid, and housing processes were designed to operate at a leisurely pace once all the necessary information was assembled. Processers in OAR were accustomed to operating in a specific manner, and they were not excited about breaking their patterns or trying to make decisions without all of the required information available. The troubles with Project 500 stem not from unwillingness to cooperate, but from the inability of the heavy administrative machinery to move quickly enough.

Not only was the machinery cumbersome but it was also difficult to coordinate. The long established procedures
for coordinating the efforts of admissions, financial aid, and housing were too slow for the summer of 1968. Special administrative coordination was necessary but it was not forthcoming.

Responsibility for the coordination of SEOP was delegated to the Office of Student Personnel in general and to Clarence Shelley in particular. As one of the provisions of the May 2 agreement, Shelley was also designated Assistant to the Chancellor and therefore had direct access to the Chancellor. Shelley had the authority and responsibility to coordinate the program's development.

It is important at this point to distinguish between authority, power, and influence. Authority refers to the powers vested in an office or role, while power is the ability to control the policy making processes, sometimes without institutional sanction. Influence is merely informal power.27

Using these definitions, it is clear that Shelley had the authority to coordinate but not the power. Because he did not assume his position at the University until July 1, 1968, because of prior commitments elsewhere, he arrived when many people were on vacation and when the entire pace slows down. Moreover, he had only two months before orientation week in which to have all the pieces in place. Because of the enormity of the task, Shelley, more a counselor than a manager by nature, elected to concentrate his efforts on establishing the new program of supportive
services, academic advising, and instructional units. This decision meant that offices such as Admissions and Records, Financial Aids, and Housing had to work out their own procedures to best handle the processing of SEOP applications.

Shelley was further hampered by the fact that only one person was available to help him that summer. Together they had to line up faculty support and participation and organize the special orientation workshop. They received considerable help in August from others in the Office of Student Personnel, as already mentioned. These August efforts were directed toward making arrangements. The administrative offices which needed coordinating were too far down their separate paths by then to permit their integration into a unified and coordinated unit.

What happened, in summary, was that Shelley had neither the power, the manpower, or the time necessary to develop and implement a coordinated effort. He was a new man directing an academically questionable program, and part of the success he experienced developing the special supportive services may be the result of SEOP's attachment to an existing administrative unit and to Dean Shelden's efforts.

It is surprising that the University did not anticipate the impossibility of Shelley's task. At the very least, other people should have been hired, or temporarily assigned, to the developmental tasks which
The lack of communication and cohesiveness was also evident in the Student Services Building on the night of September 9-10. If there was a mob in the Illini Union that night, the case can be made that there was another mob of administrators trying to decide what action to take. The group of administrators numbering between thirty-five and fifty included college deans, deans of students, housing officials, and assistants to the Chancellor, among others. Many of these administrators had had no involvement with the program previously and some had no business being there. The conclusion one must draw is that the group became large to provide mutual support, and that as it grew, its ability to deal with the situation decreased. The Chancellor wanted to be advised, but in asking for the opinions of others, he received viewpoints based on attitudes and fears rather than on clear, logical thinking. As a whole, the group of administrators was unable to attain either an organized or well-focused plan of action.

There was no one really in charge at the Student Services Building. The committee approach is not very effective in a crisis situation, and no one with the necessary status took charge and directed positive administrative actions. Those who were in positions to act were reluctant to act under duress.

In fairness to the administrators in the Student Services Building, let the record clearly show that there
were few people there who had any experience dealing with mass problems. It is easy to write after the fact that someone should have taken charge, but it is much more difficult to act without experience when such an incident is occurring. Unfortunately the Chancellor and his army of advisers decided to respond to rather than to control the situation, and the damage and arrests followed.

The pattern for the lack of effective communication throughout the summer and during the incident occurred on May 2, 1968, when Chancellor Peltason unilaterally agreed to the expanded SEOP program. He did not obtain the formal support of the faculty before making the commitment, and as a result, did not have the broad base of support and involvement that might have eased organization and development problems in the summer. Shelley's job of establishing support services in instructional units could have been facilitated with full faculty support and participation.

It is possible that the unilateral nature of the Chancellor's decision alienated some members of the university community who would have supported the program otherwise. People who participate in and have a stake in a decision are more likely to direct greater effort to carrying it out. But without the broad base of active support, the channels of communication in the University were not open.
There was some resistance to SEOP that summer, but most of it was passive and unintentional, and partially the result of the inefficient administrative machinery. There are two good examples of this. One is the processing people in OAR, some of whom were not willing to "break stride" and speed up their operation to meet the unexpectedly heavy applications. The more important example was the handling of special admission applications. Every year some students who do not meet minimum requirements (such as pattern requirements) are admitted after their applications are reviewed by the dean of the college to which they are applying. In 1968 a large number were admitted via this special route, especially at the end of August; there were some delays in processing special admissions, but there is no evidence that they were intentional.

The net result was that there was limited time to organize SEOP with a ponderous administrative machine unable to move or adapt quickly enough. The commitment of May 2 was the response of a white, conservative institution to current pressures, but without understanding what it was getting into, without knowing how to deal with black students in a completely different environment, and during a time when violence and confrontation were common. Furthermore the institution made inadequate provision to delegate sufficient authority and manpower to any office to deal with these problems.
Some kind of conflict or confrontation between blacks and whites was almost inevitable in the fall of 1968. Even if there had been no problems regarding admissions, financial aid, or housing, there is a good chance that confrontation would have occurred when the different cultures of the rural white and urban black clashed. The late 1960s were times when the long-standing and justified black mistrust of the white man was being vented through more aggressive action in gaining equality in fact as well as in theory. Black leaders tried to create controlled confrontations to foster unity, to release tensions, and to accomplish goals. \(^{28}\)

The confrontation in the Union was more serious than it had to be because of the very real frustration experienced by the black students. What the black people expected and what they thought they were receiving were quite different. The University was unable to change directions and implement the program as quickly or as efficiently as expected, or with the experience necessary to avoid confrontation and disruption. Some things could have been done to minimize the confrontation that occurred, but few can say with certainty that racial conflict later in the year would not have been just as serious.
CHAPTER SEVEN FOOTNOTES


2 Interview with Clarence Shelley, July 3, 1974.


7 Interview with Jack Peltason, June 17, 1974.

8 Clarence Shelley to Chancellor Peltason, September 5, 1968, Office of the Chancellor files.

9 "The Special Educational Opportunities Program at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign," October 18, 1968.

10 Statement of Joseph Smith, September 20, 1968.

11 Tape recordings made by David Eisenman, September, 1968.

12 Interview with John Scouffas, June 6, 1974.


15 Interview with Paul Doebel, May 28, 1974.

16 Interview with Joseph Smith, May 20, 1974.


19 Interview with John Lee Johnson, June 19, 1974; tape recording made by David Eisenman, September 1968, which recounts the efforts of Bruce Morrison, the president of the Graduate Student Association, to convince the Chancellor to come to the Union.

20 Interview with Robert McNabb, June 6, 1974.

21 Interview with Jack Peltason, June 17, 1974.

22 Interview with David Eisenman, June 3, 1974.

23 Minutes of Assistant Directors Luncheon, August 27, 1968, Office of Dean of Students files.


25 Interview with Clarence Shelley, July 3, 1974.


28 Interview with John Lee Johnson, June 19, 1974.
Shelley and Jean Hill, Assistant Dean of Women, undertook. Shelley should have been free to supervise the development of the entire program rather than being restrained by a part of it.

Without broad picture direction and without continuing coordination of efforts, some unbelievable mistakes occurred. Very few meetings were held after June to determine procedures for smooth and speedy handling of applications through the housing and financial aids offices. The Housing Office did not sit down with OAR personnel to compare names of room applicants with SEOP students. OAR did not keep close watch on the recruiting efforts. What was needed was constant coordination of the parts of the whole; what occurred was that each part operated separately without communicating effectively with the other parts.

One example should demonstrate this point. On August 7, Paul Doebel, the Director of Housing, wrote a memo to the Chancellor expressing doubt about filling the five hundred dormitory spaces reserved for Project 500. Charles Warwick, the Associate Director of Admissions and Records, received a copy of Doebel's memo and immediately sent a response to the Chancellor. Note that the response went to the Chancellor rather than to Doebel; the Chancellor had to take the initiative in bringing Warwick and Doebel together to resolve the problem.
CHAPTER EIGHT

THE CONCLUSION

In comparison with the race riots and war demonstrations of the 1960s, the Illini Union sit-in was decidedly second rate. A relatively small number of people were involved, few were injured, none seriously, and the amount of the damage to the Union was only $4,061—considerably below original reports. Most of the damage occurred in the Southwest and West Lounges ($2,661). The vinyl fabric and other damage around the main desk cost $929 to repair, but only $471 damage was done in the South Lounge where most of the black students spent the bulk of the evening.

The cost of the incident was more psychological than financial. The press, especially the Chicago Tribune, blew the incident out of proportion to its actual significance. The Tribune’s grossly exaggerated reports of the amount of damage and conflict inflamed its readers all over the state. The Tribune estimated the damage at $50,000 (compared with the University’s initial estimate of $5,000–$10,000) and failed to retract its estimate prominently even when the absurdity of the estimate was obvious. Since the Tribune is enormously influential in Illinois, the people of the state were given the impression that a bunch of rampaging, ungrateful black students
deliberately ransacked the Illini Union. This was a widely accepted explanation of what happened, and it generated volumes of mail to the Trustees and President of the University of Illinois and to the Chancellor of the Urbana campus demanding the expulsion of the offending students.

While one may question the relative significance of the incident, one cannot question its impact on the Champaign-Urbana campus. The incident reinforced the beliefs of many that SEOP was an unwise venture which should be eliminated. To the credit of Chancellor Peltason, his support for the program did not waver during the days when its continued existence was under attack by members of the university community and by citizens of the state. He believed in the program and understood that responsibility for the damage rested with a few individuals rather than with the program. Furthermore most of the individuals who caused the damage were thought to be outsiders not connected with SEOP.

The incident caused some devisiveness within the student body as well. Many students had not returned to campus by September 10 and read about the sit-in in the newspapers. Some of these students, as well as faculty and staff, had given to the Martin Luther King Fund Drive the previous spring, and the damage in the Union suggested
that their sacrifice had been unwise. The sit-in, damage, and arrests made a poor foundation on which to build meaningful black-white relationships.

Hindsight provides the opportunity to identify wrong decisions and suggest better means of handling problem areas. Some of the most important problem areas have been identified: the lack of closely coordinated effort, the lack of broad-based support, the lack of sufficient authority or power in a coordinating official, and fundamentally, the lack of effective communication within and between administrative offices trying in a short period of time to complete the necessary arrangements to meet the needs of a new constituency. There are other specific areas where wrong decisions were made. The SEOP students should have been housed in their permanent assignments or in an older dormitory during orientation week; the non-resident application problem should have been anticipated; and the Union sit-in should have been defused through a visit from the Chancellor or through a massive show of concern by University administrators. But there is one serious flaw in hindsight: we cannot know whether different actions would have produced more positive or negative reactions from the students.

It has been suggested that the Chancellor was hasty in expanding the program and that the commitment, if one had to be made, should have been for September 1969. However, one must remember that impatience characterized
that their sacrifice had been unwise. The sit-in, damage, and arrests made a poor foundation on which to build meaningful black-white relationships.

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It has been suggested that the Chancellor was hasty in expanding the program and that the commitment, if one had to be made, should have been for September 1969. However, one must remember that impatience characterized
the changes of the 1960s. Those people proposing or
demanding change were "now" oriented. Changes had to be
made immediately, not two or three years later. If
the Chancellor had not agreed to the expansion for
September 1968, it is reasonable to assume, according to
Dean Shelden and Clarence Shelley, that racial riots and
demonstrations more serious than the sit-in would have
plagued the University through 1968-69. Without the
Chancellor's approval to expand SEOP to 500, SEOP would
have numbered 189, and that was not enough.

The organization of the program during the summer
and the resolution of the sit-in were hampered by the fact
that few, if any, people on campus were experienced in
such matters. The few people with experience in handling
mass demonstrations did not have either the status or the
authority to effect the resolution of the situation.
Everybody was feeling his way along with the benefit of
very few precedents anywhere. The University understood this
problem but decided to try to do the best it could and hope
its efforts were good enough. Dave Eisenman summarized
the problem in this manner:

Most sympathetic observers resist the
arguments of critics that the program was
"hastily put together," "ill thought-out,"
or "done too quickly." In the first place it
is easy to agree with Peltason's May argument
that "there are no 'experts' in this field;
we will have to learn how to educate disadvantaged
students by trying it." There was certainly an
abundance of such students on whom the University
could get started. Besides, in 1965 a distinguished university committee had submitted an outline of what such a program ought to look like; too many observers have seen such programs go back into committee for "careful further study" never to emerge. ³

The May 2 commitment was substantial and courageous. It required the commitment of time, people, and money to make it work. Many people spent a great deal of their time during the summer to implement the commitment. Shelley and, later, his assistant were the only two administrators hired to direct the program. Other offices had to reassign personnel to SEOP problems and concerns.

The financial commitment was staggering also. For student aid, program administration, and instructional programs, the University spent over $989,000 in addition to an estimated $60,000 from state scholarship funds. ⁴ Four hundred twenty-six students received Educational Opportunity Grants averaging $644, and 492 students received NDSL loans averaging $683. ⁵

More than anything else, SEOP represented a commitment of the heart and mind to racial equality and opportunity. Given the circumstances of SEOP's development, the prevailing reliance on confrontation politics, and the ominous and unsettled environment, the University of Illinois committed itself to a program which, at least in the short run, could only add to the existing instability. While one may argue that it is easier to obtain approval of a new idea when institutions are in a
state of flux, one may further argue that it is more difficult to implement such a program when the framework in which it will exist is unstable and under attack. Without sufficient time and with its priorities in question, the University made a commitment most difficult to accomplish. In spite of the incident which resulted from the commitment, the Chancellor probably reflected the campus attitude when he wrote the following words little more than a month after the Illini Union sit-in:

Given the pioneering nature of such programs, we firmly believe that our program when considered in all its aspects has met with a great deal of success. We have learned much about this kind of endeavor. There has occurred no problem--financial, academic or otherwise--that the University has not fully engaged.6

The message the Chancellor wanted to convey was that the SEOP commitment must be judged in a larger perspective. In the short run, there were difficulties which strongly affected the University. But when viewed in terms of its long range effects, the SEOP commitment can be judged as a positive force for racial equality and opportunity at the University of Illinois.
CHAPTER EIGHT FOOTNOTES


2Interview with Miriam Shelden, July 18, 1973; Interview with Clarence Shelley, July 3, 1974.

3David Eisenman, untitled and unpublished paper, n.d.


5"The Special Educational Opportunities Program at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign," October 18, 1968, Office of the Chancellor files.

6Ibid.
APPENDIX A

CAST OF CHARACTERS AND THEIR POSITIONS SUMMER 1968

Addison, David  
President of the Black Students Association

Alexander, Mary  
Officer of the Black Students Association

Barker, Lucius  
Assistant Chancellor

Bers, Howard  
Graduate Assistant, Office of Student Financial Aids

Blaze, Joseph  
Supervisor of Security and Traffic

Bowman, Jon  
Black non-student identified as participant in the damage of the President’s Lounge.

Briscoe, John  
Assistant Chancellor for Administration; after September 1, Vice Chancellor for Administrative Affairs

Corcoran, Robert  
Associate Director of Admissions and Records

Corker, John  
Assistant Director of the Illini Union

Costin, Frank  
Professor of Psychology

Dixon, Dan  
President of the Black Students Association as of May 2, 1968

Doebel, Paul  
Director of Housing; after September 1, Associate Director of the Department of Plant and Services

Eisenman, David  
Graduate Student and Staff Assistant to the Dean of the Graduate College
Eubanks, Robert  
Professor of Civil Engineering,  
Black Students Association  
faculty adviser

Finder, Earl  
Director of the Illini Union

Frazier, Rosalind  
Black Students Association  
recruiter

Harrison, Mary  
Assistant Dean of Student  
Personnel

Hill, Jean  
Assistant Dean of Women; Coordin- 
ator, Special Project for the  
Culturally Deprived

Hubble, Carroll  
Manager of Housing Operations

Ijams, Karl  
Assistant Director of Housing for  
Undergraduate Residence Halls

Irvin, Max  
Assistant Security Officer

Ismaila, Margaret  
Assistant to the Director of  
Admissions and Records

Jackson, Steve  
Black student from Champaign who  
assumed leadership, September 9-10

Johnson, John Lee  
Unofficial leader in the Champaign- 
Urbana Black community.

Johnson, Lawrence  
State's Attorney for Champaign  
County

King, Gertrude  
Officer of the Black Students  
Association

Ledbetter, Rosetta  
SEOP student

Levy, Stanley  
Associate Dean of Students

McNabb, Robert  
Night Supervisor of the Illini  
Union

Metzger, Jack  
Urbana-Champaign Campus Legal  
Counsel

Miller, Wendell  
Professor of Electrical Engineering;  
chairman, Subcommittee A on Under- 
graduate Student Discipline
Millet, Stanton  Dean of Students
Morrison, Bruce  President, Graduate Students Association
Peltason, Jack W.  Chancellor
Quick, Charles  Professor of Law
Sanford, Ed  Associate Director of Student Financial Aids
Savage, Bill  Black Students Association Chicago coordinator
Scouffas, John  Assistant Dean of Students
Shelden, Miriam  Dean of Student Personnel
Shelley, Clarence  Director of SEOP, Assistant Dean of Student Personnel, Assistant to the Chancellor
Smith, Joseph  Staff Associate, Chancellor's Office
Smith, Yolanda  SEOP student
Smyly, Jerrie  SEOP student
Strohkorb, Arnold  Food Service Manager; after September 1, Director of Housing
Sullivan, John  Assistant to Director of SEOP
Suter, Robert  Housing Business Manager
Warwick, Charles E.  Associate Director of Admissions and Records; after September 1, Director of Admissions and Records
Williams, William K.  Staff Associate, President's Office
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doebel, Paul</td>
<td>Director of Housing; after September 1, Associate Director of the Department of Plant and Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eisenman, David</td>
<td>Graduate student, Staff Assistant to the Dean of the Graduate College, and observer extraordinaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eubanks, Robert</td>
<td>Professor of Civil Engineering; BSA faculty adviser</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hubble, Carroll</td>
<td>Manager of Housing Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson, John Lee</td>
<td>Unofficial leader in the Champaign-Urbana Black community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Levy, Stanley</td>
<td>Associate Dean of Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McNabb, Robert</td>
<td>Night Supervisor of the Illini Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peltason, Jack W.</td>
<td>Chancellor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanford, Ed</td>
<td>Associate Director of Student Financial Aids</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scouffas, John</td>
<td>Assistant Dean of Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelden, Miriam</td>
<td>Dean of Student Personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelley, Clarence</td>
<td>Assistant Dean of Student Personnel, Director of SEOP, Assistant to the Chancellor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith, Joseph</td>
<td>Staff Associate, Chancellor's Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warwick, Charles</td>
<td>Associate Director of Admissions and Records; after September 1, Director of Admissions and Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Williams, William K.</td>
<td>Staff Associate, President's Office</td>
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APPENDIX C

THE AGREEMENT

112 English Building
May 2, 1968

Mr. Dan Dixon, President
Black Students' Association

Dear Mr. Dixon:

I appreciate the recent discussions I had with you and members of the Executive Committee of the Black Students' Association with regard to accelerating the University's efforts in identifying and recruiting students for the special educational opportunity program at the Urbana Campus of the University of Illinois. From these discussions we are in agreement that the following would aid in this acceleration.

1) The draft report circulated by the ad hoc special education committee contains targets for enrollment of black students which in my opinion must be increased in order for the University to demonstrate its concern for the crisis which now confronts the nation.

2) An attempt will be made to increase the number of students in the special educational opportunity program to at least 500 by September 1968, with the understanding that all students admitted to the program will meet minimum admission requirements. In this effort we need the assistance of the Black Students' Association in identifying and recruiting students locally and throughout the State. We shall also make an attempt to hire University students from your association on a part-time basis to work with the Office of Admissions and Records in our identifying and recruiting efforts.

3) The Dean of Special Educational Opportunity Program appointed to head the program will report directly to my office.
4) Arrangements will be made for members of the Black Students' Association to meet and discuss their concerns and ideas regarding the special educational opportunity program with the new Dean and other staff before the end of the semester. The Black Students' Association will be directly consulted in the adoption and the implementation of programs under the direction of the Dean of Special Educational Opportunity Program.

5) Our procedures will permit the admission of students to this program before forms relating to financial aid are completed. Accordingly, provisions have been made with the Office of Admissions and Records to admit such students whose applications for admission are now pending, and we will then make an effort to help these students secure the financial aid they may need.

6) The University will make a vigorous effort to recruit one-third of the special educational opportunity students from the local community. I am writing to the local superintendents of schools requesting their cooperation in these recruiting efforts.

Cordially yours,

J. W. Peltason
Chancellor

JWP: cjh
APPENDIX D
WHERE THE INCIDENT OCCURRED

FIRST FLOOR
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University of Illinois students arrested following a sit-in Monday night in the Illini Union will be unable to register for classes until an "appropriate disciplinary committee" has considered their cases.

That was included in a statement issued Tuesday morning by U. of I. Chancellor Jack W. Pettersen following a night that moved from a student-administrator meeting to a quiet but tense sit-in, then to destruction of furnishings of two rooms in the Union and the arrest of some 250 students.

Relating the demonstration began about 7 p.m. Monday in the Union's South Lounge, Pettersen said:

"Several men from my office went to talk to the demonstrators in an attempt to persuade them that any grievances they might have could be dealt with through orderly processes."

"The general environment," said the chancellor, "made it impossible to discuss these grievances in an orderly fashion."

Pettersen stressed that "only a small number" of students involved in destruction of furnishings in the building a view he repeated at a press conference late Tuesday morning.

He also pointed out that the U. of I. "has for many years been forced to house a few students temporarily in lounges and other space until the students in permanent spaces moved from the university."

Temporary quarters are given some students, he said, so that the U. of I. can permit the maximum possible number of students to attend.

Temporary spaces have in the past been vacated by about the third week of school.

In another statement issued Tuesday morning, a group of student leaders representing groups including Student Senate, the Graduate Student Association and the Peace and Freedom Party, it was revealed a rally was to be held at 2 p.m. Tuesday in the Union's South Lounge.

Donations and loans toward the "expected massive legal costs and bail bonds," the statement said, will be accepted in
Sit-In Gets Backlash

Campus and State reaction yesterday to reports of the demonstration in the Union Monday was predominantly harsh. Comments critical of the black students' grievances and of the University for admitting them in the first place were heard widely on campus.

University officials and trustees report the expected phone calls and visits from people who think the University should terminate "Project 596."

Students in this special program for deprived students, now this year, had grievances over housing and financial arrangements which led to the confrontation Monday. However, Chancellor Pellison indicated Wednesday that having reviewed the available facts he was determined to proceed with the program.

A phone interview with a University trustee revealed that public opinion in the State was running strongly in favor of heavy discipline and even expulsion of all students arrested. However, he agreed that this may be based on misunderstanding of the situation.

Newspaper accounts throughout the State were factually incorrect, both in causes of the confrontation and in actual events in the Union. For instance, David Eisenman, a grad assistant pointed out the Chicago Tribune's Wednesday headline article attributed the damage to the entire crowd. But a number of eyewitnesses reported that "fewer than a dozen" people were involved.

The Tribune stated that the damage was valued at $35,000. But the highest unofficial University estimate Wednesday was $9,000. In addition the Tribune said that students in the program got free tuition and living expenses, Eisenman said.

But, large and unexpected increases in the percentage of loan aid in their aid packages, and requests that some students take federal work-study jobs, contributed to the unrest Sunday and Monday he said.

The students told him they were promised more direct aid and smaller loans, and that they would not have to work, but would be free to do heavy studying to overcome deficiencies.

Asking about the accuracy of the Tribune's story one white eyewitness, a Union official, said "It made me sick. What I saw Monday night was a lot of very scared kids. Many were crying. The rampaging, vicious crowd in the papers is a lie."

University trustee Ralph Hahn, who will speak on the Quad Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. despite the demonstrations, said: "I'm concerned about the public's perception of the situation. We must get the facts out to all students and faculty," he said.

"We must get the facts out to all students and faculty," he said.

"We cannot allow these kids to fall victim to a latent racism which now holds the excuse to come out."

D.I.
9-12-68
Investigator Says Everyone Can Learn from Incident

By MARCIA KRAMER
Daily Ilini Staff Writer

"We don't believe that the Champaign-Urbana sit-in rises to the magnitude of incidents of either Chicago, Miami or Cleveland," Albert E. Jenner Jr., a member of the President's Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, told the Daily Ilini Friday.

The sit-in will be included in the study of mass violence in American cities by a special task force established by the commission Sept. 17.

Jenner said the demonstrations which resulted in the arrest of 248 blacks in the Ilini Union, was "anything of the depth" of disorders at Columbia, Berkeley or some of the other college campuses.

"We see perhaps at the University of Illinois a good example from which both students and administrators can learn," the Chicago attorney remarked. "This particular incident, in my opinion, is not one of escalation and has in it elements of credit to all concerned rather than criticism."

Praised Project 500

He went on to praise Project 500, of which most of the Union protesters are participants, as an "excellent" idea. "Such programs may be helpful in reducing the level of violence on other campuses," Jenner said, "and maybe in life in general."

The project brought to the University underprivileged students who otherwise might not have been able to attend college.

Scrutiny of the program and resultant sit-in will be studied extensively by the task force. "Our first appraisal has to be whether the UI sit-in was purely episodic rather than endemic," Jenner pointed out. "The sit-in may have been a coincidence in the sense that special circumstances brought it about and there is no long-range significance," he went on, "or there may be some long-range significance. . . ."

"We will do what is necessary to get the facts," he promised.

Report Requested

Jenner said a letter has been sent from Milton Eisenhower, chairman of the commission, to University President David Henry, requesting a report of the University's investigation of the sit-in.

"We also will seek the reports of any University-related (but not administrative) organizations," he said.

The reports will be sent to William Orrick, a San Francisco lawyer serving as director of the special task force, and to Lloyd Cutler, a Washington lawyer and executive director of the commission.

They will distribute the reports among task force members to study and summarize.

Executive Session

When the task force members have completed their work, the commission, meeting in executive session, will consider the task force reports. If further questions arise, the task force will be reactivated to determine appropriate answers.

"We're not an adversary," Jenner insisted. "We're conducting a high-level study into what are the causes of violence in the United States."
Estimate U. of I. Needs $80,000 for ‘500’ Project

By Paula Peters

Perhaps 1,500 persons, most of them University of Illinois faculty members and students, gathered Monday afternoon for a two-hour discussion of the Special Educational Opportunities Project and what can be done to make it a success.

The audience learned, among other things, that the U. of I. has sufficient funds to operate the program, but needs some $80,000 more in unencumbered funds to operate it the way the incoming students were told it would be run.

As for the “500” students, there currently are about 600 of them, and many of them attended the Monday meeting.

The $80,000 figure was revealed by a financial aid officer for the U. of I. in response to a question from the audience. That question, in turn, apparently was prompted by remarks of David Addison, president of the Black Students Association.

Addison related the BSA Executive Committee, Chancellor Jack W. Pelisson, various deans, representatives of the Housing Division and others had met June 6 in the Illini Union.

One issue discussed at that meeting, he said, was the need to prepare a “financial package” sufficient to ensure that none of the incoming students would have to work during their first year on campus.

“IT was stipulated,” he said, “that no student would receive a loan exceeding $400, and that no student was to work in his freshman year. (Students were also to receive grants of varying amounts.)

He also complained that, while officials had said processing of applications from potential students in the program would be handled within a time limit not to exceed 10 days, he is still receiving calls from students—or potential students—who don’t know what their status is.

The financial questions, along with processing of applications, he said, “are the issues that led to the crisis—and not housing.”

Addison also said he was called back to the campus from New York late in July, when BSA members had contacted him because “the university administration had said BSA couldn’t recruit 500 students.”

The number stayed at 500, though, and when students started arriving here for the program, “a good number of them were told they had to work and earn $800, so their tuition and expenses would be met.”

“Many students,” Addison said, “had been wondering when they were going to get their money. Classes were to start in a few days.” He said, referring to the orientation week, “and they’d been on campus six days and never seen anyone from the administration except Dean (Clarence) Shelley, and he happens to be black.”

In his remarks at the opening of the session, Chancellor Jack W. Pelisson related how plans for the 500 Program had evolved.

The 500 total was decided on, he said, as “neither too much nor too little,” and U. of I. officials hoped to bring the students to campus with as little fanfare as possible.

“We didn’t want it to be set up,” he said, “so that every time any of them walked around someone would say, ‘There goes one of the 500...’ ”

The students in the program, he added, “are not mine, they’re not Clarence Shelley’s and they’re not David Addison’s. They are students in the University of Illinois, and in dealing with their problems, the faculty may learn how to deal better with the problems of all 30,000 students.”

The third panel member, Cameron Satherwaite, cautioned all present that the program “won’t succeed unless the black students make it succeed.”

He suggested it’s “important to find who did the damage and cause any injuries” Rep. 9 and 10 in the Union, “but it’s more important to show the vast majority of the students are innocent.”

The program, he said, is probably more important to the success of the U. of I. as a whole than any other single program underway this year.
Colleges that recruit in ghetto find effort benefits all concerned

(Editor’s Note: We print the following article because of its obvious timelessness for the University. Two editorial comments seem appropriate: First, the article implies that these programs are only for Negroes. The Wesleyan program mentioned in the article includes Puerto Ricans, American Indians, and poor-white students as well as Negro students. The second comment is that if the UI succeeds in bringing 500 deprived students next year and keeps up the pace, it will have single-handedly matched the “largest program in the nation” described in the article, which spreads its 2,000 students over 15 different universities. We hope this background on our University’s impressive commitment will be useful in assessing your position toward it and toward the Martin Luther King Fund, which will provide these students with the aid they need.)

By RICHARD MARTIN

(Printed by permission of The Wall Street Journal)

MIDDLETOWN, Conn. — “The idea that there should be black students here at Wesleyan University so that the white can learn from us is a bunch of crap,” declares Randy Miller, a short, husky sophomore from New York’s Harlem. “I’m not here to teach anybody.”

Nevertheless, “white cats” here and at a number of other U. S. universities are learning plenty by having students like Randy Miller on campus—ghetto youngster who just a couple of years ago would have been denied admission because of poor high-school records and low college-examination scores.

“These kids bring ideas and experiences that white students wouldn’t otherwise be exposed to here,” say Robert L. Kirkpatrick Jr., director of admissions. Seventy-five of Wesleyan’s 1,350 students are Negroes.

The learning experience obviously isn’t a one-way street. “I think every black cat who comes through here leaves with the thanks and the desire to do something for the betterment of mankind in general and black people in particular,” says Lawrence Madlock, a sophomore from the slums of Memphis who hopes to go on to law school.

Schools all over the country are suddenly seeking out students like Randy Miller and Larry Madlock. The biggest single effort to help such “high-risk” students is the Search for Education, Elevation and Knowledge (SEEK) at the City University of New York. Despite considerable opposition from faculty members who feared academic standards would be compromised, SEEK was launched in September 1963, with 102 students. Currently, 2,600 SEEK students attend college at the school’s 15 metropolitan campuses, and faculty resistance to the program has evaporated.

Other high-risk programs are considerably smaller. The University of California at Los Angeles and the University of California at Berkeley are each providing special courses, financial support, tutoring and counseling for about 500 youngsters. The University of Wisconsin has enrolled 57 high-risk students in the past two years and plans to enroll 100 more this fall. Stanford University plans to enroll 10 students in a high-risk pilot program in September.

Some schools are still uneasy about recruiting high-risk students. They worry about the high costs of providing scholarships, special courses and extra counseling. “But the thing that really frightens a lot of colleges is that by inviting in these students they are going to bring onto the campus a microcosm of all the ills of our society,” asserts John C. Hoy, dean of admissions and freshmen at Wesleyan.

“These kids are a shock to faculty members who have gone to the best colleges and the best graduate schools and have all the right liberal backgrounds, but have never taught black students,” says Mr. Hoy. “They tend to find a way to bring the question of racial problems into any course. This is fine in humanities and social sciences classes, but math teachers and some others find it kind of hard to cope with these situations.”

Negro students have prompted changes in Wesleyan’s curriculum. Courses on the history of Africa, the Negro church, the Negro family, civil liberties and urban politics are now offered, along with seminars on poverty, Negro literature and social change. “This has means a lot of heavy research work for teachers,” says Frank M. Stewart, assistant dean of freshmen and one of three Negroes on Wesleyan’s staff.

Wesleyan, a private all-black school, had just two Negroes among 526 freshmen in 1964. The high-risk program began in 1965, and by last fall, the number of Negro freshmen had risen to 39—11 percent of the class. School officials intend to maintain about the same proportion in future classes.

It’s a costly undertaking. Wesleyan provided only $5,000 in scholarships to black students in 1964. This year they are receiving $170,135. “Those are just the direct costs of financial aid. The indirect costs of the program probably add another 25 percent,” says Mr. Hoy.

“We don’t view this as a philanthropic effort,” adds Mr. Hoy. “In the next 10 to 15 years, this group of alumni is probably going to make a contribution to our society that will be far out of proportion to the average Wesleyan graduate’s impact.”

Many of the students enrolled in the first years of the high-risk program dropped out. But all 29 of the latest group are still in school. “We’ve been amazed that the attrition rate is so low,” says Mr. Hoy. “We’ve taken kids who couldn’t even get into state universities.”

The program has not been without its problems. Last November, at a “soul music” concert in the freshman dining hall, a number of white students threw beer on a small group of black students and their dates, shouted insults at them, and made obscene gestures. “I had told myself it couldn’t happen here because everybody is so liberal, but I guess incidents like this happen everywhere,” says Larry Madlock, the student from Memphis.

In the dormitories, one or two black students are assigned to each floor. Many of them resent this “forced assimilation.” “They feel they have to educate all the white students on their floor about black power and the black culture, and it really taxes their time and gets on their nerves,” says Mr. Kirkpatrick, the admissions director.

“We can’t be resident professors of black power and problems of the ghetto,” says Bill Hicks, a freshman from Harlem. “I’m struggling to answer the questions in my own mind, and I don’t have time to solve the problems of these dudes who come into my room at midnight and want to talk till 4 a.m. when I need to be studying.”

All the same, some white students say they are getting new insights into racial problems as a result of having the Negro students on campus.