HARPER'S MAGAZINE
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Attention: Mr. John Fischer
The Politics of Education for the Disadvantaged.

I. Brief Background of SEOP at the UI
   A. Statistics: 1965 Reports & Projects
   B. CRT after King (the incident at Honey's house)
   C. BSA – rise & position in the spring

II. Brief Sketch of the Summer
    A. Recruitment
    B. Fund Raising
    C. Development of Program

III. The Union Incident

IV. Reactair
   1. Press
II. External Condition
1. Cutbacks in OEO
2. State financial problems
3. Law & Order
4. Black militancy at other U's.

V. Details of the U
1. Relations w/ legislature
2. Relations w/ the press

The current situation: Under assumption that the program is inherently indefensible, the U. is retreating as fast as it can from all controversy.

13% of qualified-division did not enter college that term.

Higher Board Research
Summary Report - # & Rate
U.S. Office of Education - Migration Study

Dr. Keith Smith
Assoc. Director of Higher Educ. Office
March 12, 1969

Dear Mr. Eisenman:

Mr. Fischer has been in California for several months, and instructed me to give your article to several of the other editors here, who have read it with interest. They have decided that we cannot publish it in Harper's for several reasons. The first is that we have had two articles about campus unrest and the possible solutions to the problems of higher education in the past six months, and it is our policy not to overburden our readers with material on the same general topic. The second concerns the scope of the articles we publish. Your piece is quite specific in its focus, and Harper's tries to avoid such a limitation, mainly because of the national character of the magazine.

Thank you very much, however, for letting us read 'On Admitting Slum Products'. I hope that it will find a suitable publication.

Sincerely,

Emily Keast.

Mr. David Eisenman
912 W. Illinois
Urbana, Illinois 61801

Emily Keast
Assistant to John Fischer

cc: Gene S. Graham
into rigid legal exercises, costly, cumbersome, inherently prolonged, and un-suited to a university setting. "Star Chamber" replied the students.

Various faculty groups issued statements of confidence in the administration, the program, and its students. A motion that the University drop the civil charges was introduced into the Urbana-Champaign faculty senate. Peltason replied, correctly, that once charges were filed only the State's attorney could drop them. The students were soon pointing at Columbia where the administration successfully petitioned civil authorities to drop charges brought during its spring disturbances. Why couldn't Peltason do the same? When he didn't, wasn't that evidence he was giving in to public opinion -- no matter how ill-informed? (And what steps had he taken to counter the misinformation!) The suspicion and paranoia was palpable well into November and has never completely dissipated.

Students and faculty also demanded that university hearings be postponed until after disposition of the civil cases, arguing that evidence introduced in the former might be held against the students in the latter. Others, apparently without strong "property hang-ups", argued that all cases should be dropped; there had clearly been misjudgment on both administration and student sides, they argued, and it was best simply to forget the past and concentrate on the future. The University proceeded with the hearings.

It emerged that Peltason had spoken privately with both candidates for State's Attorney and each had indicated that he would not be inclined to introduce evidence from the university hearings. But both had asked him not to make their discussion public in this "law and order" year. When the winner revealed the conversation after the election one of the faculty members who had been pressing "drop the charges" resolutions wrote to the Daily Illini that he was upset by Peltason's secret "accommodations" and wondered how much this sort of thing goes on.
While on-campus jousting was consuming countless hours of student, faculty, and especially administration time, out in the "real world" things were just as bad. By chance, when the Union incident hit the newspapers a House-Senate conference was in progress working out differences between versions of a new student aid bill, both containing clauses barring aid to students who disrupt campuses. Peltason was on the phone to Washington. Then angry statements from state legislators began to filter in. If the university did not clean its own house, rumbled local representative Charles Clabaugh -- author of the infamous act barring subversive speakers -- the legislature might have to step in. And it was the year for submitting the university biennial budget, which would contain a timid but crucial request for a special educational opportunities program. Then word came that $506 money for such programs may well be cut 87% in 1969-70. The first year's financial crisis, not yet solved, suddenly looked small compared with the dismal long-term prospects.

The real world contains not only irate citizens, threatening legislators, and impoverished funding agencies. It also has real antagonisms, jealousies, and fears. Uncomfortable among their fellow students, worried about finances and studies, blacks in the SEOP increasingly found themselves under duress from black youth in Champaign-Urbana.

Negro students, from ghetto and rural areas especially, often go through "identity crises" much more severe than those which have traditionally caused middle- and upper-class students so much pain. Is one to be black, or Negro? Does one have an obligation to "his people" or is he an individual whose obligations are like others' -- to wife, family, and community broadly taken? Many blacks, just like whites, are untouched by such torments but a large number have to face them in a situation like that in Urbana where there is no way to put out of mind the life you left since a few blocks away youth are still living it.

The local black gangs have been an increasing problem in the campus and
Union area for several years. Police in the Union have been doubled several
times; minor disturbances are common. Numerous university committees and com-
munity commissions have been formed, and individuals hired to work directly on
the festering problems of the black community in the twin cities. Progress is
painfully slow.

It appears to have been local youths who did the damage in the Union and
thereby "gave the Project a bad name." On the other hand, one of the primary
movers of the program in the first place was an articulate young local militant
leader. In any event, open hostilities erupted in November between local blacks
and members of a Negro fraternity -- symbols of the "sellout" to the white estab-
lishment, perhaps -- whose social events were being crashed and disrupted. Just
before Thanksgiving a short battle left a gang leader bleeding on the sidewalk
from a head wound inflicted with a brick. This incident augured further trouble.
So frightened were a number of black students that they left early on their vaca-
tions and returned late.

In the classroom instructors have found that few generalizations about SEOP
students are possible. Many have handicaps, some of them severe; but the vari-
tion among them is too great to suggest any general policy beyond great flexibility
and much individual attention. The students, on the other hand, want to be treated
as much as possible like everyone else and often reject contrived and distinguish-
ing "special help."

Their presence has definitely shaken up faculty who are looking with fresh
amazement at the traditional curriculum and approaches. The feeling is wide-
spread that if the resources are available the special educational opportunities
program can stimulate a thorough-going reassessment of higher education in this
urbanized, technological era. Most conversations about the program return eventu-
ally to money; innovation is always much more expensive than maintaining the old
ways and if the University of Illinois is to make maximum use of the opportunities
It will be admitting only about 400 new SEOP students in 1969, a 30% cutback, and even that number is uncertain. That will mean that about two-thirds of its students will continue to come from families with incomes greater than $10,000.

What does happen to a dream deferred?

* In Sept., '69, 277 new SEOP students were enrolled.