

TO: All Current Students

February 23, 1976

Because Fall Term was rather hectic and ended with many issues of concern left unresolved, I am writing to try to bring you up to date on the events that have occurred since then.

On January 29, Gail and Tom Parker resigned their posts as President and Vice-President, and Chairman of the Board, Merrell Hambleton, assumed the presidency on an interim basis. On Saturday, January 31, the Board officially appointed Trustee Joseph Iseman as Acting President to serve through the Spring Term, 1976.

Mr. Iseman came to Bennington on Wednesday, February 4 and spent the next three days talking to faculty members, students, administrators, and the Faculty Steering Committee. These meetings culminated in a Steering Committee meeting on Friday evening, February 6, at which the faculty passed a unanimous resolution of full confidence in Acting President Iseman.

In addition, the faculty voted unanimously that the most important objective of any non-term use of the College's facilities must be the maximum financial benefitting of the College, consistent with its good reputation as an educational institution, and questioned the advisability of the establishment of a (relatively) independent corporation. The faculty also asked that it be consulted as to the nature of the programs that utilize the College's facilities to insure that the activities not prejudice the good name and quality of Bennington College which are the faculty's vital concern and that these activities not infringe on the faculty's traditional prerogatives.

It was further agreed that the letterhead and all materials circulated by Bennington Summers would contain a statement making clear that Bennington Summers is not a part of the College. Finally, it was agreed that all material concerning the Jazz Laboratory would explain clearly that the program is not associated with the Black Music Division of Bennington College.

Mr. and Mrs. Iseman will be moving to Bennington during the week of February 23 and will be here full-time during the Spring Term.

The Faculty and the Trustees have agreed to establish a number of small committees to work together with members of student task forces on the educational and financial concerns that face the College. Those of us on campus are looking forward to those discussions, and we are also looking forward to the beginning of the Spring Term. Returning students should return to the campus on Wednesday, March 10, and classes will begin on Thursday, March 11.

I have tried to keep this relatively brief but also to provide you with a summary of the major events that have occurred over the Non-Resident Term. Please feel free to write or call if you have questions.

Ronald L. Cohen
Dean of Studies