

Recognizing the grave political and educational crisis which this nation and this college presently face, I believe that the college cannot continue to carry on its normal and traditional functions in the next two weeks. I recognize the desire and the need of individual members of the community to participate in non-violent and informational political activities, and by suspending normal activity for the remainder of the current academic year we allow individual members of the community to engage in such activities.

After consultation with the Chairman of the Board of Trustees and other members of the Board, I am therefore recommending to the Faculty that classes be suspended for the remainder of the academic year and that the campus be officially closed at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 13.

This means that: 1) there will be no final examination period this year; 2) there will be no Commencement activities this year; 3) that by the period between now and May 13th, students will have the opportunity to meet with their instructors to work out arrangements for the conclusion of their academic responsibilities under conditions which Dean Wall will discuss; 4) that individual Grinnell students will have the opportunity to engage in educational and informational activities of their own choosing until the date of closing.

President Glenn Leggett
Grinnell College

We have just returned from Washington, D.C. We left as moderate, perhaps even conservative students appalled by Cambodia and Kent State. We went to denounce the disparagement of our rationality at all levels of government and also with the hope that our voices not fall on deaf ears. Our intention was to impress upon them that immediate conciliatory action would be the only saviour of higher education in this country. Furthermore, we went to Washington to implore those who exhibited a lack of understanding to make a sincere effort to listen to student dissent. Our agenda included visits with Sen. Harold Hughes, Sen. Jack Miller, Iowa Representatives Kyle, Schwengel and Smith, John Price, Special assistant to the President, Daniel Moynihan, Herb Klein, President Nixon's director of communications, and Secretary of State Rogers (with astronaut Mike Collins thrown in for celestial guidance.) We found Hughes sympathetic to be sympathetic totally with student frustration and Schwengel to represent the only other ray of hope in the Iowa delegation. The others were hassled with gross misconceptions and outright disdain for the type of student dissent now present in our college campuses. We employed a tactful approach and offered positive suggestions while bluntly expressing our revulsion at the repressive policies employed by the Nixon-Agnew Administration toward dissenting students. This type of plea, however, fell on deaf ears. We insisted that the threat to higher education that exists at this time is unprecedented in American history and sat horrified as our remarks were received with indifference. Having done our damndest to present ourselves as moderate and rational student dissenters, we unfortunately have to report that Washington, D.C. does not seem to sense the urgency of the situation that we know exists. Therefore, we suggest that all institutions of social conscience expend every last ounce of effort in political action to articulate the impossibility of continuing normal activities during this crisis situation.

We plead for unity among students, faculty, and administration to achieve this end as expressed in the Tom Thomas proposal. Washington is dark with ignorance, we must attempt to shine light from Grinnell.

Kathy Heize
Phil Seich

Student Representatives in the delegation
to Washington

UNREASON AND REASON AT GRINNELL

Several hundred campuses all over the country exploded after the many-pronged American invasion of Cambodia. A larger secondary explosion came after National Guardsmen killed four students at Kent State University in Ohio when other students were demonstrating and throwing rocks.

One of the most interesting explosions was that of Grinnell College. From the start, faculty and administration shared the students' feelings and sought help to help them express them constructively. By student and faculty vote, classes were suspended for 36 hours.

One group of student protesters occupied the off-campus ROTC building. The occupiers camped out in the place. They called it the "Demilitarized Zone."

President Glenn Legget had bigger zones in mind. With the occupiers still in the building, he left for Washington as part of an all-Grinnell delegation—two deans, two professors, two student leaders, two citizens of Grinnell—to petition their government for redress of grievances.

In one long day, they got in to see Secretary of State William P. Rogers for 75 minutes; they saw two White House officials (John Price and Daniel Moynihan), both Iowa senators, three Iowa congressmen. The students did most of the talking.

The delegation had been formally authorized by a vote of the student body.

President Nixon had talked with a student delegation from Kent State earlier and that day he talked with one of the two delegations of college presidents which wanted to see him. These and the Grinnell delegation all had the same point to make: that the explosion on the campuses was not just the work of a few wild radicals, but the deep feelings of hundreds of thousands are involved.

The proxies got a promise from the President to tone down administration language about students, but deep differences remain.

The students on the Grinnell delegation were not sure they had got their point across, but they tried hard. And they were listened to.

Fury is human. But in a rational world, people must reason together, people must listen to one another.

Des Moines Register May 10, 1970

May 11, 1970

TO: Grinnell College Students and Faculty

FROM: Glenn Leggett, President of the College

With the overwhelming support of the students and faculty of the College, my recommendation to close the College for the summer as of 6:00 p.m., Wednesday, May 13, has been accepted by the Board of Trustees of Grinnell College. The Trustees have instructed me to close all college facilities except those essential to the maintenance of the college plant and its year-round operations as of that date and hour.

Students who have not made other arrangements for off-campus housing within the community should plan to depart for home by that hour.

At this difficult moment in the history of our College and the nation, it would be inappropriate for me to wish you a good summer, but I do want to wish you a successful and constructive time in whatever activity you may be engaged. My hopes for peace go with you.