

TO: President A. D. Bruce

FROM: Clanton W. Williams

SUBJECT: Desegregation

DATE: February 27, 1956

1. It may be of interest to the Board of Regents that the question of desegregation is becoming a matter of significance at the University of Houston. The following items are noted:

a. During the past two years the deans or the Registrar have had verbal or written expressions from some forty Negroes. Some have simply asked for catalogs; others have asked whether or not Negroes are admitted. A few have actually sought admission.

b. On August 31, 1955, you appointed a University Committee on Integration comprised of the Registrar, the Assistant to the President, and the Vice President, Academic Affairs, Chairman. The Committee was instructed to "study the problems relative to integration." That Committee has acted as the clearing house for information bearing on the subject through its Chairman. It has been keeping the Deans informed and seeing to it that they and the Registrar act in coordination; it has also sought advice of the University's attorney, Mr. Cartwright.

c. Since last August:

Two Negroes have personally sought information relative to admission into the College of Law;

Six Negroes, including a professor at Texas Southern University, have sought information or actually asked for admission into the College of Arts and Sciences;

One has contacted the College of Technology;

One, the College of Education; and

Two, the College of Optometry.

d. Most of these cases have been handled verbally; several have required correspondence. The replies have been to the simple effect that "No Negro has been admitted to the University of Houston."

e. There are currently three cases which may not be so easily dismissed, even though we have handled them in the same noncommittal manner as above:

(1) One woman, Dr. Freda C. Gooden Richardson (O.D.), of La Marque, Texas, without indication as to race in her earlier correspondence, has submitted an application for admission, in which application she indicates that she is a Negress. She wants to take refresher work in Optometry

(apparently as preliminary to taking the State Board examination). She can get this at no other institution in Texas.

(2) Assistant Instructor Clarence W. Mangham of Texas Southern University (the Communications Department), who has been pursuing a Ph.D. degree at Leland Stanford University during the summers, wants to take some specialized courses in our Department of Radio and Television. He is highly qualified and we are one of the few schools in the country (and the only one in the South) where he may take this work.

(3) Rachael D. Gardner, a "Junior High Special Education Teacher" in Houston (Burrus), holds an M.A. degree from Texas Southern, plus 6 hours of Graduate Study at Texas University in Special Education, with "a B- average" (though her letter does not indicate so high a degree of scholarship). She wants to pursue work in Mental Retardation, a field which only we, the University of Texas, and San Marcos offer. Her letter of February 16 concludes, "Please let me know as soon as possible."

Mr. Vitulli, the Registrar, in submitting this letter to me for reply (I am now preparing all replies) states, "This could be a genuine test case. I hope I'm wrong."

2. I have no recommendation to make other than that we keep stalling. You might see fit to read this to the Board for any contrary decision it may wish to make.
3. Our attorney Mr. Cartwright states that he sees no escape-- that we may have no hopes that a court ruling would be favorable to our refusal to admit academically qualified Negroes. He states that the only possible grounds for argument we might have, and which a court might accept, would be in cases where Texas Southern University offers courses of study parallel to our own, but he adds that a decision favorable to us would be highly doubtful. It is noted that none of the three immediate cases falls in that category. It is further noted that a recent edition of The Informer, a local Negro newspaper, carried a statement to the effect that the University of Houston was next.

RECEIVED

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
3801 CULLEN BOULEVARD
HOUSTON 4, TEXAS

MAR 12 1956

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

OFFICE
VICE PRESIDENT
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

March 8, 1956

Memorandum to: Members of the Board of Regents

Subject: Greensboro, North Carolina, Ruling on
Anti-segregation in Universities

C
The other night I was asked by a Chronicle reporter whether we had had any applications from negroes to enter the University of Houston, and if so, what effect the North Carolina ruling would have on our decision.

O
Following is an excerpt from the Houston Chronicle, Tuesday, March 6, 1956:

"U. H. GROUP STUDYING INTEGRATION

A University of Houston faculty committee is studying 'the matter of integration,' president A. D. Bruce said Tuesday.

Bruce said he will have no comment until the faculty committee reports.

P
The University of Houston receives junior college aid from the state.

The state funds received are applied to students' tuition. University officials say they consider the funds to be an aid to the students and not to the institution."

Y
I now plan to submit another report from the faculty committee at the next board meeting, March 19. I have expedited action on this problem.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ A. D. Bruce

A. D. Bruce
President

ADB:ep

bcc: Dr. C. W. Williams ✓