

31 October 1969

To: The Grinnell College Faculty, Students and Staff

From: Joseph F. Wall, Dean of the College

The recent publicity given to the college in regard to incidents involving the Federal Bureau of Investigation was of such nature that while in no way wishing to add to the notoriety already given, I feel that a factual statement to the college community as to the events that occurred would be helpful in understanding the situation.

On Thursday, October 16, the day after the moratorium, I received a phone call from a reporter on the Des Moines Register staff to the effect that he had heard rumors that there were FBI agents on the Grinnell College campus investigating the organization of the moratorium, similar to the inquiries being conducted on the Simpson College campus. I informed the reporter that I had no knowledge of any inquiries being made at Grinnell.

The next morning, October 17, however, Dean Walker informed me that there were agents from the FBI Des Moines office on campus. Thinking that they might be here in regard to the moratorium, I asked that if they wished to speak to any college official, they should speak with me, as President Leggett was out of town. A few minutes later, Mr. Gustafson and Mr. Haberer called at my office. Mr. Gustafson said that they were on campus in order to talk with a college student who had been arrested in Chicago on October 11 during a demonstration. He said that he wished to talk with her and her roommates. Dean Walker and I were in agreement that we preferred to contact the girls so that they might be informed of their legal rights, including the right not to appear if they so desired inasmuch as this request for an interview by the FBI agents was not a legal summons to appear. Accordingly, I asked Dean Low to contact the girls to tell them that if they wished to speak with the FBI agents they might do so in a conference room in the Grinnell Office Building rather than other alternatives suggested by the agents, i.e., student rooms, the agents' automobile or the local police station. They were, however, under no legal compulsion to do so. They were also informed of their legal rights, including their right to legal counsel if they desired. Dean Low later informed me that she had conveyed this message to the girls and that they had decided to meet with Mr. Gustafson and Mr. Haberer. Neither Dean Walker nor I had any other direct contact with FBI agents on the campus.

On Tuesday, October 21, Mr. Thornton of the Des Moines FBI office and another agent called at the office of President Glenn Leggett. Dean Low also attended the meeting. Mr. Thornton named 11 Grinnell students he wished to talk with about alleged involvement in Chicago demonstrations on or about October 11.

In concurrence with advice from the college's legal counsel, the Grinnell firm of Bierman and Bierman, President Leggett, Dean Low, and Dean Kimbo agreed to inform the 11 students of Mr. Thornton's desire to meet with them and gave the students Mr. Thornton's Des Moines phone number. This was done by Mrs. Low and Mr. Kimbo, who also informed them of their legal rights, including their right to legal counsel.

We do not know how many of the students, if any, have since met with Mr. Thornton or other agents.

On Tuesday afternoon, October 28, President Leggett and I met with a group

