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## The Plan

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Cheek: The Plan  
**The Plan**

(Statement by Dr. James E. Cheek at  
his first press conference on  
July 8, 1969, one week after his  
arrival on campus)

**M**any persons have expressed to me their wish that I share, as soon as possible, some of the plans and expectations we have for Howard University in the months and years that lie ahead.

I have been at work here only seven days and while it would be premature for me to have arrived at definite conclusions about specific programs, I have had sufficient time to determine where my initial efforts and energies should be directed.

There are a number of priorities in higher education generally which must be priorities for Howard in the decades ahead. Our faculty and staff this year [1969] will be engaged in determining these priorities and in formulating the appropriate plans for meeting them.

During the next 90 days we shall seek to give attention to the following:

■ Build a stronger bond of confidence and trust between students, faculty and administration without which the purpose and mission of an institution of higher learning cannot be pursued or fulfilled. We shall seek to develop positive and constructive ways by and through which students are active participants in the formulation of decisions that affect their well-being and welfare.

■ To define for all constituents of the university, both internal and external, the limits of dissent and the parameters of disagreement. It is important that we distinguish between "student militancy" and "student anarchy." The former the university must cultivate and inspire; the latter the university must resist and deny. The very character of an academic community and the purposes it seeks to serve demand that it dishonor lawlessness, irrationality, intimidation, violence and the threat of violence. Those who advocate such procedures, sponsor their exercise or partake of their implementation demonstrate in so doing their unfitness for membership in a community of scholars.

Howard University will honor and sponsor constructive change, but it will not and cannot be an instrument of, or party to, violence and the fostering of ill will between the peoples of this nation. The wrongs of the past can be righted without resorting to the methods and tactics that invite anarchy.

■ To reform the curricula of our schools and colleges where reform is clearly indicated. We will not promote change for the sake of change, but where change is necessary we will regard it as a necessity. The students' demand for "relevance" and the faculty's demand for "excellence" are not contradictory and mutually exclusive. Both with different rhetoric seek the same ends. Whenever and wherever academic excellence is promoted, academic relevance has also prevailed and vice versa. No college or university has achieved distinction without honoring and pursuing both.

Our efforts, initially, will center on the liberal arts which constitutes the "hub" of our academic activity and represents the foundation of our scholarship. But the influence of our efforts and their results in liberal arts will be felt in all academic units of the university as we seek more effective ways of teaching and learning.

■ To follow through with developments already in progress to bring their realization to fulfillment. These include:

(a) The establishment of a school of business administration.

(b) The establishment of a school of home economics.

(c) The development of the medical or health center.

(d) The dividing of architecture and engineering into separate schools.

(e) The creation of a department of Afro-American studies and its development into an institute or school as the national center for such activity in the nation with an international dimension.

■ To create an additional administrative division to be known as *development and university relations* headed

by a vice president with responsibility for coordinating and directing the university's efforts in securing increased financial support and in strengthening our relations with the federal government, the community of Washington, the alumni, corporations and foundations and the general public. The increasing competition for scarce financial resources and the increasing demands upon the university in the areas of teaching, research and public service indicate that the university must move immediately to establish the goals and objectives, the financial resources required, and to devise ways and means of procuring such resources to achieve these objectives.

■ To increase and expand the range of community services we provide. Howard is already involved in a number of projects and programs of a public service nature—e.g. as the programs of the dental school in the State of Mississippi. The resources of the university are enormous and we shall reach for ways to promote more leadership in helping to resolve problems related to economic deprivation, educational disadvantage, social isolation, the urban isolation and the urban crisis.

By the early part of 1970, we expect to be able to announce to the nation a program for Howard in the decade of the Seventies which will clearly establish this university as one of the outstanding centers of learning in the world. If we can be allowed the opportunity to develop our plans over the next six months without disruption and interruption, we shall pursue a course of action designed to create in our nation's capital an example of both academic excellence and academic relevance.

All we need is the opportunity to develop these plans. □



