

December 28, 1971

To: The Joint Library Board

From: Venita Boyd

Subject: Response to Mr. Trezza's Memo of December 7, 1971

The response of the Douglass Center Project Advisory Committee to Mr. Trezza's memo of December 7, 1971 is reflected in the Sunday telegrams sent by individual members of the Committee. These telegrams were sent to various members of the Joint Board and to selected State officials. In essence, the Douglass Advisory Committee calls for further inquiry into the issues surrounding the project by all parties concerned. This public inquiry should take place before branch status is effected.

As a member of the Douglass Advisory Committee, I am shocked by the panicky railroading tone of the State Advisory Subcommittee's memo. It is clear to me that the agreements reached after many long hours of interchange by the local parties have been completely overlooked or ignored by the State Advisory Subcommittee. In the last paragraph of the document entitled "A Statement of Problems" dated November 22, 1971, the local parties state, "In requesting funding for Phase ~~II~~ in full knowledge of the situation, the libraries of Champaign and Urbana affirm their intention to work with the Advisory Committee to come to a satisfactory understanding and they reaffirm their intent to maintain the Douglass Center Library after Phase ~~II~~ in accordance with the original proposal."

The signators of that document fully recognized that human problems particularly as they pertain to race relations take time!!! The progress of interchange and mutual understanding was just beginning. Phase II was to herald new trust between the parties. Instead, within less than a month's time the local parties are being commanded to act in haste.

It is being asked that we sever communications with those persons with whom many vital issues have been worked through. This is evident in Item 2 in which it is suggested that the present Advisory Committee be abolished. This request leads one to believe that the State Advisory Subcommittee wishes to hear only one point of view - its own. The community opinions which diverge from the subcommittee's should be eliminated. If this is not the case why hasn't the State Committee asked for a list of Douglass Advisory Committee members. So as to be certain not to just assume that the Douglass Committee does not represent a "broad spectrum" of the community. Or, if the Subcommittee has been in communication with community people who are interested in serving on the committee, why have their names not been submitted to us?

The Champaign Public Library is being told to administer and control all the misunderstandings and complexities for all parties - instantly! What does control mean, control what? Is the honest interchange between parties thought to be a harmful, unwieldy action needful of control?