

# BSA blasts 'efforts' to remove Elkins

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The Black Student Alliance (BSA) has denounced any efforts to remove professed homosexual Bob Elkins from his resident assistant post.

A statement passed unanimously at the group's Tuesday meeting says "the Black Student Alliance denounces any action by any member of the University or Board of Visitors toward removing Robert Elkins from his present position as Resident Assistant...based on his admitted homosexuality or his leadership role in the Gay Student Union."

On Friday, University President Frank L. Hereford Jr. appointed a special

sexual preference," saying the "issue is (not) between gay students and non-gay students."

The BSA charged that the issue is a violation of human rights, adding that the issue could "set a precedent for future violations of personal rights."

The BSA stated that Hereford has said "that the alumni are the driving force behind his request that Mr. Elkins leave the dormitory."

The BSA denounced Hereford's "sighting" of student opinion in favor of the alumni who are only "nominally" affected by the matter.

Some of the students on Elkins' hall have signed a petition asserting Elkins is

performing well as their resident advisor and should be retained.

Two organizations, the Association for Woman's Concerns and the Counselor's Committee on Human Sexuality, are also preparing letters of support, according to Elkins.

Neither groups' officers could be reached for comment.

Elkins has received support from several quarters since Hereford's appointment of the panel to consider the matter.

Several Student Council members have criticized Hereford's actions. Council Vice-President Stefan Underhill said Council may take a formal stance at next Tuesday's meeting.

For full text of BSA letter, see page 2.

committee to advise him on the possible removal of Elkins from the Resident Staff program. The committee is expected to report tomorrow.

The final decision on whether to remove Elkins from his RA post will be made by Hereford, according to students and administrators involved.

Elkins confirmed that Hereford cited a "conflict of interest" when he asked Elkins to resign from the Resident Staff program last week.

He also confirmed the BSA's assertion that Hereford told him the conflict would not be resolved if Elkins merely resigned the GSU presidency.

Elkins confirmed yesterday he has twice offered to resign as President of the GSU and both times Hereford responded that it would not eliminate the "conflict of interest."

Hereford declined comment on the BSA's statement.

Elkins said yesterday that he has formed an informal advisory group to counsel him.

Elkins' homosexuality was discussed last spring by a Resident Staff Committee and the decision was made to accept him, according to Dean of Students Robert T. Canevari.

Elkins said he was glad to receive the support of the BSA, adding he feels it will help him to retain his post.

The seven-member group is composed of "close friends," according to Elkins, all of whom he said he knew before the controversy arose.

Hancock Dormitory Senior RA Dave Verkin, Bonneycastle Senior RA Debbie Williams and BSA President Rhonda Simpson are members of the advisory group, according to Elkins.

Elkins declined to reveal the names of the other members of the advisory group.

The BSA declined to take a stand concerning the "morality of Mr. Elkins' F

# 'Where do we draw the line?'

The Black Student Alliance serves as a channel through which black students may redress the wrongs imposed upon them. We are, therefore, sensitive to the violation

*This position paper was submitted by the Black Student Alliance.*

of human rights in all sectors of the University, the state, the nation, and the world. In keeping with this purpose, the Black Student Alliance denounces any action made by any member of the

University or Board of Visitors of the University toward removing Robert Elkins from his present position as Resident Assistant in Hancock House based on his admitted homosexuality or his leadership role in the Gay Student Union.

We, the Black Student Alliance, feel that Mr. Elkins has every right to be a member of the Resident Staff Program in the dormitory because he entered the selection process (approved by Student Affairs for the program) having already stated the fact that he is gay. We also feel that to make an

exception in Mr. Elkin's case would invalidate the entire selection process.

After becoming a member of the Resident Staff, Mr. Elkins assumed the role of President of the Gay Student Union. University President Frank L. Hereford Jr. believes this present position of leadership presents a "conflict of interest" with his role as resident advisor. However, Mr. Elkins has offered to resign from his GSU leadership role and Mr. Hereford has informed him that the "conflict of interest" will

remain. We, therefore, reject a "conflict of interest" as Mr. Hereford's reason for seeking to remove Mr. Elkins from the dormitory.

Mr. Hereford stated that the alumni are the driving force behind his request that Mr. Elkins leave the dormitory. The students residing on Mr. Elkins hall have given him their 100 per cent support. Mr. Elkin's senior resident has commended him for his competency as a Resident Staff member. Dean of Students Robert T. Canevari and Assoc. Dean of Students in charge of Resident Staff, Chester R. Titus, have found no reason to question his ability as a Resident Staff member.

We, the Black Student Alliance, feel that the requests of students should carry as much, if not more, weight than that of the alumni. We, therefore, denounce the President's slighting of a student sentiment in favor of that of several alumni, particularly in a matter that directly affects students and only nominally affects alumni.

Finally, we, the Black Student Alliance, feel that this type of encroachment of human rights will not stop here, but, instead set up a precedent for future violations of personal rights that will eventually deny the rights of other minorities (i.e., black and women students) and then spread to all sectors of the student body.

The Black Student Alliance does not feel that the issue is between gay students and non-gay students—we neither condone nor condemn homosexuality. We do not feel this is the point of contention and therefore make NO STATEMENT concerning the morality of Mr. Elkins' sexual preference. Our concern lies in the question, "Where do we draw the line?" For this reason, we will continue to address and actively redress wrongs which we feel threaten the welfare of the black student body. We view the University's dealings with Mr. Elkins as such a wrong.