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GSS votes race was motive in Orono attack

By Damon Kiesow and Kim Dineen
Staff Writers

The assault on two black University of Maine students Sunday morning was racially motivated, the student senate voted at their meeting Tuesday night.

About thirty African-American students attended the meeting to express their concerns about racism on campus.

In a statement issued from the African-American Student Association (AASA), they declared, "Racism is a very big problem here at the University of Maine... Many people reading this letter may feel that the University is fine just as it is now. Well, we felt likewise until this past weekend."

Ethan Strimling, off-campus senator, introduced seven resolutions dealing with the racial problems on campus.

All seven resolutions were written by Strimling in cooperation with the AASA.

The first resolution voted on by the senate acknowledged that there was racism on the

UMaine campus.

The second resolution acknowledged that the Sunday attack, in the opinion of the senate, was racially motivated.

The senate voted to send a recommendation to President Lick urging him to:

- create a multi-cultural curriculum required for graduation
- pursue more hiring of minority faculty and staff, and also more enrollment of minority students
- install more programming to educate faculty and staff about racial problems and multi-cultural relations
- install into first-year students' orientation programs a section about racism past and present problems
- install more resident directors' training about dealing with racism and holding forums to discuss racism

The senate also voted to create a stand-

ing committee to discuss and deal with racial problems on campus.

"This committee could also extend its interests; there is a need to look at other issues such as violence towards women and homophobia," said Cheryl Daly, assistant dean of multicultural programs.

John Halstead, vice-president for student affairs, read a letter from President Dale Lick, to the university community.

"We wish to clearly state that acts of verbal and physical violence based on racial, ethnic, religious and cultural hatred of any kind have no place in the university and will not be tolerated."

Halstead repeated that paragraph while reading the letter, he said, for emphasis.

All senators supported introducing more racial education into the university. But one student expressed his doubts about the sincerity of the senators.

"I wonder if we weren't here if there wouldn't have been more objection to the resolutions," said Quester Hannah, one of the students assaulted Sunday morning. "I hope in my heart that you continue to endorse this."

In other business the Task Force on Program and Budget Review brought its

draft report on budget cuts to the student senate.

Charles Rauch, director of financial management, presented the report and took questions from the senators.

The task force was charged with proposing program reductions for fiscal year 1992. Rauch said the task force was asked only to look at program cuts, not tuition raises or pay cuts.

The Board of Trustees requested \$166.5 million in funding for FY92. According to John McKernan's last proposal the university system would receive \$133.5 million.

The university system, following \$8.2 million in cuts will receive a \$144 million allocation this fiscal year.

Rauch said earlier this semester that he expected the University of Maine's cut to be between \$2 million and \$12 million dollars.

"It could be the \$2 million but it's not going to be the \$12 million," he said.

The task force based its recommendations on \$2.5 million in cuts.

The recommendations included reducing the number of vice presidents, cutting or seriously reducing a men's varsity sport and combining various departments and offices across the campus