

March 14, 2006

Statement from the Illini Media Co. Board of Directors:

Decisions have been made regarding the status of suspended Daily Illini Editor in Chief Acton Gorton and Opinions Editor Chuck Prochaska. Gorton has been relieved of his duties while Prochaska has been invited to return as the opinions editor.

The Illini Media Co. board of directors — following a thorough review, a report by a student task force of senior members of the staff, and a hearing with Gorton — found that Gorton violated Daily Illini policies about thoughtful discussion of and preparation for the publication of inflammatory material.

The board, made up of University of Illinois students and faculty, voted unanimously to fire Gorton.

The interim Daily Illini editors in chief, Shira Weissman and Jason Koch, decided to reinstate Prochaska; however, he declined to return for personal reasons.

The two editors had been suspended with pay since Feb. 14 when the student task force was convened to investigate the internal decision-making and communication surrounding the Feb. 9 publication of an editor's note and the Danish Jyllands-Posten cartoons.

The board is disappointed with this outcome and regrets that Gorton's actions necessitated his termination less than three months into his one-year term. But the board believes this conclusion is in the best interests of The Daily Illini newsroom and will allow the student journalists to carry on with the newspaper's 135-year-old tradition of a vibrant, independent student press.

The Illini Media Co. is a nonprofit student media organization and is independent from the University of Illinois.