

# NOON Meeting - Monday May 23 WHY WE SAT-IN White Plaza

The sit-in has ended. For over two days a group of students sat in President Sterling's office to protest the administration's decision to provide university facilities for the Selective Service deferment examination; a decision which deeply affects the lives of many students but which was made by one dean without any participation by students or faculty members.

We would like to make clear that, while the immediate object of our sit-in was to urge that the Selective Service exam be cancelled or that at least there be a moratorium, our protest was and is not directed only to this issue.

The authoritarian decision to have the examination on the Stanford campus merely serves to symbolize the authoritarian nature of this university's decision-making structure. By fiat the administration turned over university facilities for the purpose of conducting an examination which discriminates against the poor and ill-educated.

We believe that this oligarchic structure must be democratized, that students must be given a fair share in making decisions that concern them both as students and as citizens.

Students live in an academic community which should exist primarily for its students. Similarly, the university exists in society; thus our demand that students be given the right to share in university decisions in effect is a demand that they be accorded the opportunity to determine how the university affects society and how society affects the university. The university is no "inner city," no social servant which produces for society but which does not criticize and attempt to change it.

Thoughts such as these led us to protest and to continue our protest. These the Administration has refused even to hear, much less to consider. There was no communication, no reasonableness, no explanations, just "no." We were subjected only to power, intransigence and intimidation.

We came as individuals anxious to express what we believe to be just demands; we left without a just hearing. But we are not through. Our decision to end the sit-in is merely the beginning of our resolve to obtain what is rightfully ours.

## History of the Sit-in

Background to events of May 16-21: With the widening of the Vietnam war, the Selective Service System changed the terms of 2-S deferment for students. Class rank was requested by draft boards and, as a further determining factor, Selective Service instituted the College Qualification Test. In January, 1966, several Brandeis professors declared their moral revulsion at assigning grades which determine life and death for students. On April 19, 1966, the Academic Senate of S.F. State College voted unanimously that the university neither furnish class rank nor administer the test.

At Stanford, the Stanford Committee for Peace in Vietnam expressed opposition to the test, and faculty members of SCPV stated willingness to take the matter up in the Academic Council meeting for May 17. Although there was "direct action" against the first test May 14 on many campuses, SCPV, waiting on the outcome of the Academic Council meeting, merely handed out the SDS counter-test to students coming out of test.

Monday, May 16: The SCPV steering committee delivers a letter to President Sterling requesting cancellation of the 2nd Selective Service Examination, scheduled for May 21 (copy to prof. Hilgard, Chairman of Exec. Committee of Academic Council)

Tuesday May 17: The SCPV invites President Sterling, by letter, to attend an open meeting, May 19, to discuss the Academic Council decision on the draft issue, which along with classified contracts, was known to be up for consideration. All faculty members attending the meeting are presented with a copy of the letter to President Sterling and the invitation to the May 19th meeting.

Wednesday, May 18: We learn that the Academic Council failed to act. The selective service exam issue was referred to a committee, which would report on June 10th, i.e., after both exams scheduled for Stanford would have been given.

Stating that no representative of the Administration would be at the May 19 meeting, Deans Winbigler and Smith brief SCPV leaders on the University's relations with the selective service system. Dean Winbigler states that he, himself, with President Sterling's concurrence, made the decision that Stanford administer the test. Dean Winbigler is asked if he knows the contents of the test, and he replies that he does not. He is asked if the moral implications of the test are relevant to his decision, and he replies that they are not.

Thursday, May 19: noon: We hold a rally in White Plaza. President Sterling does not attend. Deans Wert and Winbigler are present in the audience but have not been authorized by President Sterling to speak. We make three demands:

- 1) A moratorium on the draft test.
- 2) A public investigation of the social and moral implications of the test.
- 3) A public report on the finds of the investigation.

1:15, We march to the President's office to give him our requests. He is in San Francisco at a Board of Trustee's meeting. We speak with Deans Winbigler and Wert and ask them for a public decision-making meeting with the President, or someone authorized to speak for him. They cannot speak for President Sterling, but inform us that he replied to our invitation, saying that he would meet privately with the SCPV after the Academic Council committee's report. This letter, dated May 18, was received by the SCPV on May 20 at its Stanford P.O. Box. Our letter requested a telephone reply. Dean Winbigler said he would not negotiate with students on any matter at any time, and he would never recommend that President Sterling negotiate with students on any matter. President Sterling offers by phone, through Dean Wert, only a private meeting to discuss our demands. Feeling that acceptance of such an offer would violate the spirit of our demands, we reject this proposal. No other offer comes from the Administration.

3:30, We sit-in. The group sitting-in involves many persons not in SCPV. We agree that each person is there as an individual, and that there are no leaders. Our demands are:

- 1) That the exam be cancelled.
- 2) That no grades be released by the University directly to the Selective Service system.
- 3) That there be a public decision-making meeting with President Sterling or his representative.
- 4) That negotiations begin on increasing student participation in decision-making.

We stay the night in President Sterling's office.

Friday, May 20: Morning; President Sterling offers, through Deans Winbigler and Wert, to have a closed meeting with several delegates from our group about the possibility of an open meeting (i.e., he would not guarantee an open meeting), but on condition that we end the sit-in. In attempt to meet the President half-way, we drop our first two demands, but continue our request for an open decision-making meeting. Sterling rejects our offer. At 11:45 A.M. police barred all students then outside (except Daily reporters) from entering President Sterling's office, and we were told that the judicial procedure of the University was in process. Afternoon; We request to speak with members of the Executive Committee of the Academic Council, again hoping to suggest a compromise that President Sterling would find satisfactory.

By noon Friday it became clear to us that the Administration position on our request for an open meeting was inflexible; we had run into a stone wall. By noon Saturday it became clear that the faculty as well as the Administration constituted that stone wall. The faculty at large, and the three available men of the Executive Committee who appeared before us upon our request, from before the Academic Council meeting through 2:30 on Saturday, abdicated their moral responsibilities and their professional responsibilities to the students of this university rather than balk at the edicts of President Sterling. We base this indictment on the following facts:

- 1) That the Academic Council delayed a decision on the draft exam until June 10, that is until after both scheduled exams would have been administered.
- 2) That at a time of emergency, when students were willing to risk punishment in order to assert their right to share decision-making power in those matters which directly affect their lives, the Executive Committee of the Academic Council, the official arm of the faculty, was unable even to call a meeting to consider the situation.
- 3) That when, at the time of the impasse with President Sterling, we directed a request to Professor Arrow of the Exec. Committee to call for an open meeting on the subject of Selective Service which President Sterling or his representative would be requested to attend, the few members available refused to request that President Sterling or his representative attend such a meeting.
- 4) That, at the crucial moment when the Stanford Police had come in to take our names, the only member of the Executive Committee present refused to give us even his personal assurance that he would work for negotiations between the Executive Committee and David Harris to include students in university decision making on this particular issue, an assurance that would have ended the sit-in.
- 5) That during the sit-in there was no show of support whatsoever from the faculty for students who were requesting no more than that the President of their University address them in public on an issue that for many of them literally involves life or death.
- 6) That during the sit-in no more than seven faculty members bothered even to appear before us to ascertain what they could do to help, or even to get accurate information on the issues and negotiations that were under way.
- 7) That, at a time when unified action was called for between faculty and students, the faculty acted not independently but in effect as an arm of the Administration.

Given these facts, it seems clear to us that the faculty of Stanford University with few exceptions are thoroughly unconcerned with the lives of their students, are unwilling to act in any way contrary to the Administration, and effectively have no power whatsoever in University decision-making. Their actions during the last few days seem to us an appalling indication of moral bankruptcy and intellectual cowardice.

We call on the faculty to prove us wrong in our opinion. This is what they must do:

- 1) The Executive Committee of the Academic Council should immediately begin negotiations with David Harris to integrate all student and faculty committees.
- 2) The Executive Committee of the Academic Council should immediately begin discussions with David Harris as to how these committees can be given final decision making power.
- 3) That twenty faculty members immediately call for an emergency meeting of the Academic Council, and that the Council call immediately for an open meeting on the questions of Selective Service and classified contracts and insist that President Sterling attend such meeting to defend his policies before a panel of faculty and students.

Evening; We ask the Executive Committee in a letter to Professor Kenneth Arrow, Secretary of the Committee, if it would request that President Sterling attend a public meeting. We intended that if President Sterling agreed, we would end the sit-in. In a still further attempt at compromise, we drop our demand for an open decision-making meeting and make one final demand--that there be an open meeting to discuss decision-making at Stanford, with the President or his representative in attendance.

Saturday, May 21: Morning; President Sterling rejects our offer. At 10:00AM we were told by the police that we could not leave. Ten minutes later we are told by Dean Smith that the judicial procedure is irreversibly in motion. Shortly thereafter, as the police are about to take our names, Professor Packer of the Executive Committee enters with a reply to our letter to the Executive Committee. He states that the Executive Committee could not get a quorum and so could not make the request. The individual members available would call for a public meeting but would not agree to ask President Sterling to attend it. We then ask Prof. Packer as a last minute request if he personally would work for negotiations between ASSU President David Harris and the Executive Committee concerning ways of including students in that committee's decision-making on the Selective Service issue. We specifically inform Prof. Packer that this would almost certainly end the sit-in. He refuses. We cannot reach any other members of the Executive Committee. We are told later--Sunday, May 22--by a member of the Student Judiciary that Dean Winbigler stated that only those in President Sterling's office at 2:30 P.M. Saturday were subject to the judicial process.

Noon--2:30; We decide to leave. We issue statement that we are leaving and explain our decision. We leave at 2:30 P.M. and march to President Sterling's house to give him our requests. He is not at home and Mr. Glover receives them.