

Six Professors Explain Reasons for Supporting Demonstration

H. Bruce Franklin was an active and influential force behind the Stanford sit-in last month and, like many other participants, he never missed a class during the demonstration.

Franklin had good reason to avoid cutting his classes. He teaches them.

The 34-year-old English professor is recognized as the faculty member who became most involved in backing the 57-hour sit-in by taking part in it.

Five other professors were often mentioned when students were asked which faculty members participated most actively and sympathetically in the sit-ins.

Why did the half-dozen professors participate as supporters of a clearly illegal occupation of a campus building?

For Franklin the principal cause was to gain amnesty for seven

students threatened with suspension for their part in an anti-Central Intelligence Agency demonstration at Stanford.

Franklin, an avowed Marxist who has taught at Stanford for six years, also supported the sit-in for political reasons.

The other five professors looked favorably on the sit-in because they felt that:

—Power of students and faculty at the university had to be strengthened.

—Without faculty support for the demonstration police would have been called and a riot would have resulted.

—Administrators were being intransigent in dealing with the protesters.

—The CIA is an organization with which the university should in no way associate.

—The sit-in could be considered as opposition to the Vietnam war and to corporations and government agencies supporting the war.

Suspensions Proposed

Franklin had taken part in the anti-CIA protest which led a faculty committee to propose suspensions for the students.

That proposal began the chain of events that led to the sit-in.

Marc Sapor, a Stanford Medical School student and one of the seven facing possible suspension, called Franklin on Thursday, May 2, to tell him of the faculty committee recommendation.

At 11 p.m. Franklin and about 35 other persons met in Sapor's home to discuss the situation.

They decided to call a campus rally for the next afternoon. At the rally, Franklin suggested moving to an area outside President J.E. Wallace Sterling's office.

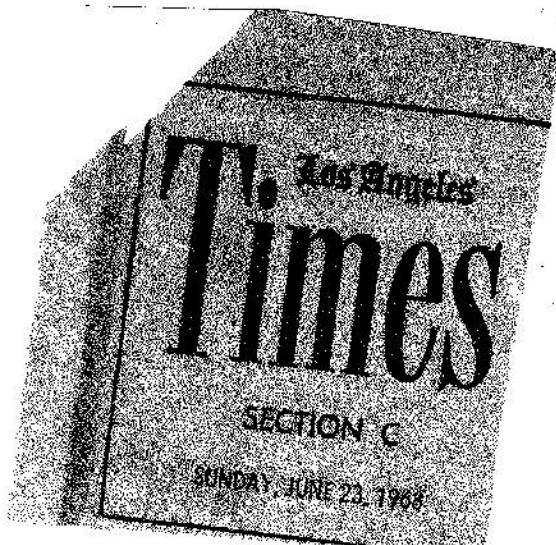
"I wanted to show that suspending students for the anti-CIA demonstration would be absurd," said the professor.

"So I suggested something technically more serious. There is a specific rule against demonstrations in the lower quad where Sterling's office is located."

More than 100 students staged a 45-minute sit-in outside the president's office.

There they formulated demands for campus judicial and legislative reforms and for dropping the suspension proposals against the seven anti-CIA demonstrators.

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Professors Tell Views of Sit-in at Stanford

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Franklin helped formulate the demands, and Sterling was given until the following Monday to grant them.

The demands were not granted by the deadline, so a sit-in began in a campus administration building.

Franklin, dressed in the blue denim jacket and pants he wears to the classroom, addressed demonstrators several times during the sit-in.

He urged protesters to hold out for their demands, and repeatedly explained that "the sit-in tactic is one of occupying property in order to gain control over one's own life."

Franklin said one reason for supporting the sit-in was his wish to "build a radical movement for radical social change."

To do so, he said, requires taking power "out of the hands of the corporations and the military and putting it in the hands of the people."

Increased student power—a sit-in goal which grew in importance as the demonstration wore on—would be a step in the direction Franklin wanted to take, the professor said.

Says Purposes Perverted

His other objective was to attack "forces within the university which pervert what the purposes of a university ought to be, have been and to some extent are."

"Those forces," Franklin said, "include the military as represented by the ROTC and other organizations for which universities work—such as the CIA—which I see as exploiting and oppressing people in this country and overseas."

A professor who supported the sit-in because he wanted to strengthen student and faculty influence at the university is Michael Novak, 34.

He teaches religion and will leave Stanford next year for a position in the State University of New York system.

"Novak is a mighty supporter of the sit-in at Stanford. He has been the most influential professor I know of in the university," the senior class said.

He spoke at several times at the sit-in.

"The main reason I supported the demonstration is that the role of students and faculty at Stanford has got to be strengthened," Novak said.

"A university is chiefly a community of learning.

culty are chiefly that community.

"Administrators should principally be the servants of the community, but that is not at all the case at Stanford."

In a mimeographed statement written by Novak and distributed at the sit-in, the professor commended "both the wisdom and the courage of the students who are sitting in."

He said the issue behind the demonstration "concerns the university's ties to the CIA and to other government agencies."

"What do we, students and faculty and administration, wish the university's policies to be?"

Urged Commendation

"The seven convicted students should not be punished, they should be commended for awakening us to Stanford's moral responsibilities when no one else cared."

"That is what education is all about."

Dr. Robert M. Polhemus, 32, a professor of English who has taught at Stanford for five years, participated in the sit-in "because I felt faculty support for the demonstration was the only thing that was going to prevent another Columbia."

He feared that the administration's policies would lead to a police-student clash similar to the one this spring at Columbia University in New York City.

Polhemus said the faculty support became necessary because of "complete intransigency" on the part of Stanford administrators.

He cited an open meeting of students, faculty and administrators on the first evening of the sit-in at which Provost Richard W. Lyman had rejected protesters' demands for judicial and legislative reforms and dropping proposals to suspend the seven anti-CIA demonstrators.

Tells Choices

"It was billed as a meeting in which views would be exchanged. In fact, the administration wanted to use it to effect its own policies," Polhemus said.

The day after that meeting, Polhemus led a rally outside the building held by sit-in participants that "the choices are police or amnesty, and people shouldn't kid themselves that it can be any other way."

The next day a small majority of the faculty at a

mended granting amnesty to the seven anti-CIA demonstrators and the sit-in participants. The recommendations, and others associated with them, caused the sit-in to end.

Reluctantly the administration accepted the recommendations.

Although Polhemus' principal reason for supporting the sit-in was that he saw the alternative as leading to police clearing the occupied building, he said he approved of the aims of the demonstration for reasons beyond the specific student demands.

"Students are seeking authority because, among other reasons, the Vietnam war has taught them they can't trust anyone to do the right thing for them," the professor said.

"Students see three alternatives when it comes to the war: they can go to Canada, go to jail, or go into the service."

"To enter the service is the easy way out. It's like cheating on your conscience because students see the war as immoral."

Student's Thought

"Once a student finds himself facing the options of Canada, jail or the service, he thinks, 'How did I get here?'"

"He sees authority as having put him there."

"So he wants to participate in that authority and direct it toward ends he considers moral."

"Inability to affect in any way the policy of a war they have to fight is just one example of how students lack deserved authority."

The sit-in, said Polhemus, was basically a student effort to gain a measure of authority.

Irving L. Horowitz, a visiting professor of sociology from Washington University in St. Louis, objected to the same administrative intransigency which worried Polhemus.

Except to leave for meals, to teach and to take several naps, Horowitz stayed at the sit-in for its duration.

He spent the time talking with students—more often than not about their studies.

At first his interest in the protest was principally academic—as a sociologist, he wanted to study the sit-in.

Shortly after the demonstration started he advised the students to leave the building.

But action by Stanford administrators turned Horowitz into an active supporter of the protest.

Called Insulting

Horowitz, who felt the protesters' demands were legitimate, called their rejection by Provost Lyman "not only highly intransigent, but in many ways

"I felt that the opportunity that the students provided for the administration was badly botched," the sociologist said.

Two professors named by students as strong supporters of the sit-in said they based their support on opposition to the Vietnam war and university involvement in corporations and government agencies which contribute to that war.

The men are Dr. Charles Stein, 48, a statistics professor at Stanford for 15 years, and Dr. Robert Finn, 45, who has taught mathematics for nine years on the Palo Alto campus.

"Implicitly, the sit-in was against the question of war," Stein said. "Because the anti-CIA demonstrators being supported had been demonstrating against a war-related organization."

"I'm personally inclined to think of the ideal university as a place where one can try to develop and communicate knowledge in isolation from the rest of the world," Stein continued.

"However, I am coming to believe that faculty and students should play a part in transforming society as they may be doing in France by revolutionary means."

Both Stein and Finn spoke at the sit-in, but Finn's position can best be seen through a letter he wrote to the campus newspaper.

Students, wrote the professor, "are right if they feel that a university which is unable or unwilling to dissociate itself from the development of instruments of torture, murder and mass destruction, or with the loathsome activities of the CIA, is a university whose highest officials should be called to account."

Finn told The Times that Stanford is closely associated with building war machinery through its investments, its research and the interests of its trustees.