

STATEMENT ON THE STUDENT SIT-IN BY IRVING LOUIS HOROWITZ, VISITING
PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY, READ BEFORE THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL. WEDNESDAY,
MAY 8, 1968

The Stanford Community--and that includes administrators, faculty and staff--has every right to feel a sense of deep pride in the Stanford students at this time. After spending most of my waking time between Monday noon to the present with the students at the Old Union, both as observer and as participant, I have come to the conclusion that the demands of the sit-in students are just. They represent a concern for legal equity that they do not now possess.

The issue is simple: seven students, held to have violated University policy on demonstrations, in this case CIA recruitment on campus, were accused of obstructionist tactics. They were found not guilty of the charge by the Associated Students of Stanford University (ASSU) Judicial Council (a committee of their peers), only to find this decision reversed by the Interim Judicial Body (IJB), a group composed of faculty members concerned with problems of the law, but closely linked to administrative processes.

The demands are also simple: the four points raised--(1) to reverse the IJB decision on the students suspended; (2) to dissolve the IJB; (3) to form a student-faculty appellate board; and (4) to have such a Board hear appeals from defendants only--all boil down to one insistence, the infusion of a new concept of judicial equity that takes into account the actual role and worth of the student population.

The strategies employed in reaching these goals were also simple: the infusion of large numbers of students on the Old Union, a minor administration sanctuary, until such time as they are spoken to directly and unequivocally about the immediate issues and demands registered. The lockout which has ensued has had an ironic twist: it led to the padlocking of an administration building, thus providing a symbolic definition of administrative intransigence; and further, to locking out administrators rather than students. No bureaucratic machinery can long withstand its obligations to deal directly with its constituency, or at least a large part thereof.

The goals insisted upon by students stem directly from the situation, yet represent a growing universal sentiment from the Sorbonne in Paris, Columbia in New York to Northwestern in Chicago. It is the restructuring of university life to take into account student power and to extend and legitimate that power in areas of university governance, no less than student performance.

If I recite these issues, demands, strategies and goals, in so cursory a way, it is not for rhetorical purposes, but to bring to your attention what issues are not being fought over, no less than what the issues are. The issue is not invasion of property, the demands are not illegality to run rampant, the strategy is not violent armed insurrection or arson, the goals are not utopian or far fetched. In a real sense, the current student actions have already demonstrated the existence in social reality of "student power." The settlement must thus hinge on the legitimation, recognition, and respect due to that power. If the

member of the Board of Trustees who spoke with the students, David Packard, is sincere in his desire not to create "the kind of thing they had at Columbia University" and instead work toward "a partnership approach" to the problem of campus discipline, and I have no reason whatsoever to question this sincerity, then some show of bona fide must be made by the administration. Provost Lyman must be free to discuss student demands without the encumbrances and restrictions under which he labored Monday evening at Memorial Auditorium. There can only be an exchange when both sides recognize the power of the other. To expect proper bargaining to begin only with territorial abdication by the students would be a return to a plea of mercy, and not a recognition of demands for justice.

Faculty and administration have a profound obligation to protect the integrity of the University. But any serious definition of that integrity must involve the protection and respect of the student body proper. No doubt, the striking students do not represent a universal student sentiment. In fact, they may represent only a minority, albeit a large minority sentiment. But this is a major portion of the Stanford constituency. No authentic consensus can be reached without them. The debacle at Columbia resulted after the New York police were called in to solve the problem by force. The debacle at the University of Paris (Sorbonne) was created after the police were called in to rout the 300 demonstrating students-- only then did student numbers swell to over 10,000 and only then did mass violence occur. The serious agreement to Black student demands at Northwestern were met over the last weekend, and today Northwestern functions at its normal pace as a majority institution of learning. It might be

said that Stanford is at the cross-roads. It can go in the direction of Columbia or Northwestern. But this heavy burden does not rest exclusively with the striking students, but more with the administration and the faculty.

It might be objected that this constitutes a veiled threat of blackmail. Let us be candid. Power always implies the potentiality of its use. It is precisely the task of authority to avoid the use of that which is implied. The basis of law is universally recognized and mutually consented to authority. And no "interim" body can claim such authority. Lacking such authority, power alone as Hobbes long ago said, is clubs. We should stop suffering the shock of recognition. Students are men and women now, and no longer boys and girls. Age levels move up, social responsibilities increase, laws must change. To move beyond shock is the first step toward a settlement of student unrest.

Before getting to a formal recommendation, permit me to add a personal, ethnographic note. The self-discipline, dedicated sincerity, and deep-seated humanity exhibited by the striking students under conditions of extreme tension, exhaustion, and the constant threat of coercion is something I can only marvel at. As a University professor coming to you from another, yet quite comparable institution, I can only say that somehow and somewhere we must have done our job well-- perhaps despite ourselves. For these are the finest group of students, both in intelligence and instinct, that it has been my privilege to teach. We must not earn the scorn and contempt of young people who have heretofore stood in awe and wonderment at this citadel of learning and its artifacts.

In sum and in substance, we must not ignore the just demands of the student for equity in law and decency in life. The student demands are modest without being meandering. To meet those demands would end the strike immediately. To ignore those demands would either lead to a prolongation of the strike, or to a smashing of the striking through a bashing of student heads. And these heads are as dear to me as are those of my own two sons. And I am certain this is a shared sentiment. Indeed, let us reason together. But before reason must come recognition-- a recognition that student power is inexorably linked to university power--which in turn means academic freedom.

There are grave struggles ahead for academic men. The threat to university officials, teachers, administrators and staff alike, have not dissolved. Those of you who have engaged in recent civil rights efforts and in anti-war efforts, must surely realize the enormous role that students have come to play in such macropolitical events. You are now called upon to recognize that some enormous force possessed by students in micropolitical events. Can we possibly fail ourselves, by failing our students at this time. I would hope not.

My resolution is simple, and one which takes into account the sensibilities of all parties to the dispute.

President Sterling has been asked by the Committee of Fifteen (C-15) to consider the issue of punishment for the anti-CIA demonstrators independent of any other body--taking into account the evidence presented before both the ASSU and IBJ. The bringing into existence of a new

legislative and judicial structure to make policies for student conduct provides a mechanism which can serve as an additional source of legitimation for presidential decision-making.

It is clearly unrealistic to expect three constituencies such as ASSU, the Faculty, and the President, to approve this new structure, and put its proposals into operation with the next few days. But the Committee of Fifteen does provide in its guidelines to the President the right to immediately appoint a student-faculty joint judicial body that could consider and review currently pending cases. The very fact that such a new structure, although ad hoc, or interim in nature, would have student participation, and hopefully would approximate the future permanent legal structure, could thus provide a new and generally favorable climate for all parties to enter negotiations in good faith.

But such an implementation of a new legal structure must go hand in hand with an enriched concept of judicial review and due process. Simply, this means that the anti-CIA demonstrators, who have been placed in the odd situation of having their "innocence" reverse by a "higher" body (IJB), must now be given every assurance that their cases will be reviewed by the new appellate system. Further, they must be treated as innocent until proven guilty. And this means the restoration of their rights to register at Stanford University for the forthcoming quarter, if the students so desire, and to participate fully and without prejudice in the life of the university community.

These then, are the basic minimum guarantees for the immediate end to the sit-in strike: (1) The acceptance by the faculty body of the

recommendation by the Committee of Fifteen for a Judicial Overhaul;
and (2) the rejection by the faculty and administration of all punitive
actions previously taken by previous, quasi-legitimated boards, against
the student anti-CIA demonstrators and their current supporters.

Irving Louis Horowitz