

THE POLITICS OF COMMUNITY

This is not a state of seige. We are not 'occupying' the building simply to tie it to a specific set of 'demands'. We are also in the process of finding 'room', of building a 'public space' where we may all, as members of a community, act in a political way.

When we sat-in we were expressing our horror at what has been happening and our desire to change it. But sitting in has focused all of our energy--energy usually consumed by the 'grades' and the gigantic forces that the institutions of this psuedo-community have over us. Our attention has been taken away from murder and oppression and channeled into procedures and rules. We are attempting to redirect this attention and energy, to once more join thought and action, means and ends.

At first our feeling of personal responsibility for the actions of Stanford University was expressed as a moral concern of a fundamental nature. This concern led us to public action.

Objections to our actions have been made by focusing on the means we have used in pursuing our ends. Those who do so frequently reject our ends as well and hence are in bad faith--they have masked their objections with a curtain of abstract rationalizations.

People frequently want to discuss action as an abstract question. However, it is always concrete and practical. We have only one alternative to our action--another action. Therefore, faculty who 'share our profound moral concern' or agree with our 'point' can only persuade us on the level of action. Not by reassuring us that they agree with our words but by the example of their action. We welcome their active demonstration of other ways of immediately confronting the concrete actions of a government which has undertaken the task of re-making the world in its image--an image of cold, de-personalized efficiency. 'At General Dynamics products are our most important progress.' The momentum of the present course of America is immense.

We wish to interrupt the routine that has allowed these gigantic changes in the University to carry us to a place where large-scale war research has gone unnoticed. We have been petitioning the university for over a year to re-examine its position on chemical and biological warfare, counter-insurgency and classified research. Meanwhile, SRI has recently renewed its two contracts to research chemical and biological warfare techniques.

We know what non-acting carries us to...either to Viet Nam as a soldier, or, slowly, step by step, into a position in the corporate elite of our empire. These are the rewards for showing the ability to sit for sixteen years and to master the art of giving to immediate authority 'what he wants.' ('Do you know what he wants on that paper?' etc.). In the absence of action we can only skillfully obey a vast array of rules or construct endless rationalizations into sand castles of abstractions that rise over the flow of events.

Any effort to influence the context of the thought or the action that has resulted is called 'obstruction' of 'normal functioning.' However, the context is the crucial factor in human activity. Our thought is molded