

THE REAL ISSUE IS SELF-DETERMINATION

It is important to remember that when the police attack on the hospital sit-in finally occurred, the immediate issues which inspired that sit-in had in fact already been resolved. Agreement on five of the six demands had been reached as early as Thursday evening. Concerning the sixth demand—that Sam Bridges be re-hired with retroactive pay—the Black Advisory Committee had met Friday morning and had recommended that it too be accepted. Dr. Gonda had endorsed that BAC's recommendation, and for a while it really looked as if a way to a peaceful settlement would be found through the tortuous mazes of hospital administrative bureaucracy. It was at this point that Acting President Miller stepped in. He announced that he had the recommendations of the BAC and Dr. Gonda "under consideration" but that he would not act upon them until the sit-in had ended.

What does this tell us about how Miller and the Stanford administration viewed the situation? What does it tell us about the nature of their real concerns in the matter? For one thing, it tells us very clearly that "patient care" was not their primary concern. If it had been, Miller could have ended the sit-in several hours earlier and with much less danger to the people and property at the hospital, simply by accepting the recommendations of his own administrator! It is also quite clear that his primary concern was not the justice or injustice of Mr. Bridges' dismissal. Since the BAC's review of the case that Friday morning, no party to the dispute has suggested that not all the facts are in or that further investigation is needed.

What really worried Miller about this situation was that it threatened his power. A black worker with a grievance and a group of his supporters had managed somehow to worm themselves into a ~~strategic~~ position where they could actually exercise a modicum of control over the manner in which that grievance was heard and adjudicated. To Miller, this was intolerable--so intolerable that rather than permit these people to succeed he was prepared to call in 175 police, arrest 25 people, injure dozens more, incur \$100,000 in damages to the hospital, and gravely endanger the security of countless patients and hospital personnel. In all fairness, it should be stated that he was willing to accept the minor changes in hospital procedure which the Black United Front had demanded during the sit-in. He may even have been willing to re-hire Sam Bridges! But he was most emphatically not willing to allow a black worker the least amount of real power to determine his own destiny.

In the hospital incident, therefore, the real issue was self-determination for black people. Self-determination is also the real issue in the current struggle over the BSU demands. Those demands ~~are~~ call for changes that would give the black community on campus and across the freeway a certain amount of real power to determine university policy in such matters as black admissions and financial aids, minority hiring practices, Afro-American studies and Mid-Peninsula land use. Lyman wants us to believe that he cannot meet the demands because there is not enough money, even though there is enough money to grant the faculty huge salary increases. He claims that to give Blacks control over certain university policies would violate the principle of "one university," but apparently he does not feel that the autonomous status of Hoover Institute violates this principle. Lyman is lying. The real issue is not money or the semi-sacred principle of "one university." It is self-determination for the Stanford black community. The people who run this university have a reputation in some circles for liberalism. What this "liberalism" evidently means is that they are willing, if pressured, to be good, kind niggers, but that they will on no account free their slaves.

All power to the people!