

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE FACULTY

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Contact: Mr. Martin Berck
280-2023 or 280-2032

We, the Executive Committee of the Faculty, regard the actions of the students who seized and barricaded Hamilton Hall on May 21 as destructive of all efforts to create a climate of mutual discourse, due process, and reasoned disagreement. In effect, the students who participated in the incidents of May 21 have said that whenever they do not agree with an administrative measure, they will seize a building or resort to some other form of violence.

We are grieved that the action of the police subsequent to the evacuation of Hamilton Hall led to the injury of a number of students. Our grief cannot, however, blind us to certain facts. The relatively calm evacuation of Hamilton Hall soon gave way to individual and group acts of violence. Bands of students behaved in an extreme and unjustifiable fashion. They deliberately broke into the office of a member of the faculty which included the irreplaceable notes on two years of original research. They vandalized buildings, going so far as to set fires in several of them, endangering the lives of members of the community.

What makes the students' conduct the more intolerable is that it was in response to actions of Dean Platt that were well within the guidelines established by the Joint Committee on Disciplinary Affairs, which stated that "In the light of these initial conclusions, the Dean of each School or Faculty should determine which students in that School or Faculty were involved in the demonstrations and, following discussion with those students, should impose the discipline

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recommended above. A student who fails to appear before the Dean should be suspended. If the student believes that the penalty imposed upon him by the Dean is excessive in view of that recommendation, he may appeal directly to the Joint Committee on Disciplinary Affairs."

The refusal of the four students to appear in person led, under the rules of the Joint Committee, to suspension. (Nineteen students did come forward and appeared before Dean Platt.) We can only conclude that the refusal of the four was a willful prelude to a provocative action which is part of the "politics of confrontation" which this group is pursuing. These are not actions which can lead to reconciliation or the restructuring of the University. Those students who engage in the politics of confrontation must bear the major responsibility for the resort to the civil authorities.

It is possible that one or more of the Joint Committee's recommendations is open to fair criticism. And we are aware that there have been objections to the particular ways in which the Administration has implemented these recommendations. These could have been raised with the Joint Committee on Disciplinary Affairs or with the Executive Committee of the Faculty. No effort to do so was made. Members of the University cannot improve its disciplinary system by breaking the law and committing outrages.

Whatever errors of the University in the past have contributed to the breakdown of confidence, the acts of violence by the students cannot be justified. We are convinced that virtually all students deplore such actions. We fervently hope that the events of May 21 will lead all students, including those who for reasons of conscience and conviction have been supporting the strike, to dissociate .

themselves from those who are clearly intent on the destruction of the University.

We hope that those who are deeply committed to strengthening the University by its reconstruction will make their voice heard.

One member of the Committee dissents from the statement as worded.