

# Report to The University Community



FROM THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

February 18, 1970

## WHAT HAPPENED?

- 11:15 a.m. Approximately 100 persons arrive at entrance to West Engineering building to protest presence of eight General Electric representatives. Engineering Placement Office Director, Professor John G. Young, attempts to read a statement of policy on questioning recruiters. Professor Young struck down, glasses broken. Demonstrators enter.
- 11:30 a.m. Windows broken in corridor as demonstrators create disturbance to disrupt interviews with Engineering students. Hallways blocked. Movement of persons in corridor halted. SACUA\* observers attempt to move in hallway, but are blocked. Police notified.
- 12:10 p.m. Ann Arbor police arrive. Demonstrators, notified of police arrival, leave building. Police enter building.
- 12:20 p.m. Police leave building. Crowd gathered. Abusive language directed at police. Police move toward vehicles. Various missiles thrown at police and police vehicles. Police respond to provocation. Demonstrators resist, scuffle with police. Minor injuries occur. Arrests made.
- 12:45 p.m. Approximately 80 persons arrive at President Fleming's office, protesting police intervention. Carpet burns by cigarettes, table legs broken, walls marked. All persons depart by 2:00 p.m.

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## INJURIES

One demonstrator taken to University Hospital for treatment of a leg injury; University Hospital also treated a faculty member and a detective for minor injuries. University Health Service treated minor injuries of one student and one non-student.

## ARRESTS

Nine students, 4 non-students

## DAMAGE

Total damage in Engineering and Administration Building estimated at approximately \$800 to \$1000.

\*Faculty Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs

FROM ENGINEERING DEAN GORDON J. VAN WYLEN

"A number of Engineering students were very disturbed about their inability to interview and to move through the passageway. There was continued danger of confrontation between the Engineering students and the demonstrators. Chris Bloch, president of the Engineering Council, was very effective in keeping these students away and preventing a major confrontation. Three or four members of the College executive committee were present from 11:30 and observed the events first-hand. They were in unanimous agreement that the situation could not be allowed to continue and that police ought to be called to restore order. I concurred and urged President Fleming to do so. My purpose was to insure the rights of students and faculty to fulfill their normal activities."

FROM ENGINEERING COUNCIL PRESIDENT CHRISTOPHER BLOCH

"The vast majority of Engineering students believe that it is their freedom of choice to interview with whomever they wish. When the Students for a Democratic Society come to the Engineering Placement service, the damage they do is much more critical than the insignificant incidents of broken windows and bloodied noses. The real damage is the hate and misunderstanding created when one man tramples on the sincere beliefs of others. Just as SDS cannot tolerate the repression of oppressed peoples, neither can Engineering students tolerate the basic ingredients of hate and misunderstanding which are the causes of such oppression. It is indeed unfortunate that it was necessary to call police onto the campus. But I believe that I speak for the majority of Engineering students when I say that it would be even more unfortunate to have the incident degenerate into a fist fight between two groups of well-intentioned people."

FROM ENGINEERING PLACEMENT OFFICE DIRECTOR JOHN G. YOUNG

"It was public knowledge last September that GE would recruit here. Bulletin notice was given last week. But no one attempted to use the formal procedure for confronting recruiters, which we adopted two years ago. We knew of possible trouble only through leaflets. I attempted to read the policy to them when they arrived. But I was struck in the face by one person and in the stomach by another, knocked down, and my glasses broken."

FROM SENATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON UNIVERSITY AFFAIRS (SACUA)

"Members of SACUA tried to enter the hallway and were prevented from doing so. We observed broken windows in the recruiting offices. It was clear that interviews could not proceed. In view of the assault on a person, damage to University property, blocking of the hallway, and inability to carry on regularly scheduled University activity, the six members of SACUA present (Professors Merle Crawford, James Hayward, Robert Knauss, Warren Norman, Joseph Payne, and Maurice Sinnott) concurred in the decision to call the police."

(See next page for President Fleming's statement)

FROM PRESIDENT ROBBEN W. FLEMING

"In the course of the disruption, I received a call from the dean of the Engineering college, speaking on behalf of his executive committee, the president of the student Engineering Council, speaking on behalf of Engineering students, and a representative of SACUA, assigned by that body to observe for the faculty. All of them told me that physical violence and destruction were taking place, and that police protection was required. I then authorized the calling of the police.

"We are at a crossroads. You will be asked to support mass action, and you will be given inflammatory accounts of what happened. I ask you, therefore, to carefully consider what those who were present have to say in this document.

"The radical left is unable to persuade people of the validity of its position. Therefore it now resorts to force. Our choice is to accept their point of view, or resist it. For myself, I long ago concluded that force and violence have no place on a campus. I do not believe that someone with whom I disagree has a right to force me to abandon my views. If an Engineering student wants to interview GE, I know of no reason why he should not do so. Is his morality inferior to that of those who believe this is wrong? Is he less able to make a decision for himself?

"There is and must be dissent on every campus. The University must always be a world of ideas, often in conflict. It ceases to be a University, however, when a group which is willing to use totalitarian tactics can impose on the rest of us its views.

"We have resisted force and violence. We will continue to do so long as I am President. If the police have to be called, they will be, but never to suppress the right to dissent in a peaceful and lawful fashion."

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