

The Cornell Daily Sun

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Cornell Lore 3,000 University Students Protest Social Limitations [ARTICLE]

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Cornell Lore . . .

3,000 University Students Protest Social Limitations

By NANCY L. DUNHOFF
This is the last of three articles concerning colorful episodes in Cornell history.

One of the most recent, as well as notorious, episodes began as a peaceable student demonstration and culminated in a student march to the home of University President Deane W. Malott.

On May 23, 1958, about 3,000 University students demonstrated over the reported "lack of understanding" between the student body and the administration. This protest culminated the friction between the administration and the student body concerning the University social code.

The conflict of ideas appeared prominently in 1956, when the administration banned liquor from Schoellkopf Stadium without consulting the students. A rowdy Spring Weekend in 1957, the postponing of Fall Weekend in 1958 and the revision of apartment party regulations, with the possibility of their being completely banned by the President's Committee on Student Activities, led up to the protest.

The administration seemed to be dictating the student social code at the University, and the students rebelled. In many cases, the Interfraternity Council and the Student Council refused to enforce the code. In the situation concerning the apartment parties, the Student Council and the Men's Independent Council both requested retention of the parties.

Demonstrations Start in Morning

Thus, in response to their dissatisfaction with policies of the administration, students gathered on the steps of Willard Straight Hall Friday morning to begin the demonstration.

One of the leaders, J. Kirk Sale '58, addressed the assembled students, who seemed unsure of what was going on. He said in part:

"We're here not only to protest the apartment ban. We're here to protest the social code, deferred rushing and crushing the faculty. Today is a day for action. We don't need people who are going to chicken out."

After this speech the group num-

burned President Malott in effigy. It was then that the demonstration got out of hand. Sale tried to disband the crowd, but could not. When someone in the crowd yelled "Let's get Malott," about 1,000 students started walking to the President's house, two miles away.

Bomb Set Off

The leaderless mob milled about the grounds of the President's home and trampled the shrubs. A group of students set off a smoke bomb under one of the bushes. It was reported that this group was composed of architects.

At the climax of the demonstration, President Malott, with several campus patrolmen, came out of his home and spoke to the group: "This University will never be run by mob rule," he said. It was reported that he also said: "You've made your point. Now you can go home."

House guests of the Malotts, Mr. and Mrs. John L. Collyer (John Collyer '17 was chairman of the Board of Trustees at the time), were in Ithaca to dedicate a \$250,000 boathouse they had donated to the University.

Mrs. Collyer reportedly said to her husband: "Are these the boys you are giving the boathouse to, John?"

Effect of Demonstrations

Many immediate effects of the demonstrations were witnessed at the University. Its four leaders were suspended until the Men's Judiciary Board could hear the case. Women who had remained

out of the dormitories past curfew were tried for lateness by the Women's Judiciary Board.

In the case of the leaders, MJB issued Paroles to two, an Unofficial Reprimand to one and a No-Action Verdict to the other. WJB gave lateness penalties to all women involved.

More far reaching effects were observed at the University, however. As a result of the protests, President Malott invited the student leaders on campus to discuss with him the "lack of understanding which exists of the objectives of the University."

Several weeks preceeding the demonstrations, the position of Vice President of Student Affairs had been established—a post to which John Summerskill had been named. This position was redefined as a strengthening agent to communication between the University and its students.

Newspaper Headlines

An interesting sidelight to this incident concerned the news coverage to the demonstrations.

Headlines in papers across the country read: "Four Suspended by Cornell After 2-Day Riot Over Girls" (N.Y. Journal American); "Cornell Boots 4 in Egg Tossing" (N.Y. Sunday News); "4 Suspended at Cornell After Riot Against Malott" (Buffalo Courier-Express); "Egg-Throwing Students Hit Cornell President" (Philadelphia Bulletin); and "Cornell Campus Cites Grievances" (N.Y. Times).

bering about 1,000 circled the arts quadrangle and then went to Day Hall. While demonstrating before the administration, Sale announced that women in Sage Dormitory would remain out one-half hour past curfew to protest.

The morning demonstration, which broke up about 11 a.m., was reported by a faculty member as being "orderly and good-natured."

Protests Continue

Twelve hours later another demonstration began in front of Sage Dormitory. The president of Student Council tried to speak at the rally, but couldn't be heard because of the noise.

This protest proved much livelier than the first, as several students in the crowd of 3,000 carried torches; from time to time, firecrackers were set off.

About 12:40 a.m. the group

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