During the latter half of the 1960s, UW students, like those on campuses all across the country, were engaged in an increasingly bitter and sometimes violent protest against their government’s involvement in a bloody civil war in Southeast Asia. Their suspicion of the promises of politicians and their rejection of seemingly bankrupt leadership in Washington led to a growing distrust of any authority, including that of the faculty, administrators, and regents charged with operating the University of Wisconsin. This fed the drive for student power and a determination to take charge of the educational process as part of the larger goal of building a better, and for some radicals a socialist, world. The latter sixties were among the most turbulent years in the University’s history, a time when students received much of their education, along with a fair amount of misinformation and cynicism, outside the classroom and in the streets.

If anti-war protests exemplified and even dominated this period, one should nevertheless remember that they did not entirely replace traditional student activities and high jinks. In October, 1969, for example, after the Badger football team’s first victory in 23 games, there was a joyful student victory march down State Street to the capitol, parading past boarded-up windows trashed in anti-war protests.\(^1\) Similarly, hormonally challenged male students, egged on by their female victims, mounted a traditional panty raid on the women’s southeast dorms less than a month after the tragic Sterling Hall bombing in 1970.\(^2\) Paradoxically, even during the most violent episodes, when Madison police, sheriff’s deputies, and national guardsmen had to be

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\(^1\) *Daily Cardinal*, October 15, 1969.

\(^2\) Ibid., September 23, 1970.
called in to restore order, there were large areas of the sprawling campus largely unaffected and uninvolved. The battle zone tended to be concentrated in the Bascom Hill-Lower Campus-Library Mall area, with the rest of the campus often ignored by the protesters.

The Vietnam Trauma

By the mid-1960s student activists at the University were shifting their emphasis from the civil rights movement at home to foreign affairs, particularly the growing United States military involvement in southeast Asia. Following the Second World War, France had sought to regain control over its former colony, French Indo-China, which had been occupied by Japanese forces in 1940 and held throughout the war. Of the three major Indo-Chinese states—Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos—the more numerous Vietnamese led the resistance to the reimposition of French rule. Under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh, a charismatic French-educated Vietnamese patriot and communist, the former colonists first launched guerrilla attacks and eventually pitched military battles against French troops sent to subdue them. Well aware of the United States’ anti-colonial origins and its action in 1946 freeing the Philippines, the major American Asian colony, Ho Chi Minh expected the U.S. government to view his independence movement favorably. Instead, the Truman and Eisenhower administrations were preoccupied in the 1940s and 1950s with rebuilding the shattered nations of western Europe and creating an anti-communist military alliance against the Soviet Union. After 1949 their anti-communist concern included the new Peoples Republic of China. The United States therefore provided arms and military equipment to the French and permitted their use in Indo-China. The Vietnamese rebels in turn received arms and other assistance from the two major communist states, the Soviet Union and China.

Despite superior armament, France was unable to win a colonial war that was increasingly unpopular at home. After suffering a major military defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954, the French government reluctantly decided to pull its forces out of Vietnam. Rather than see Ho Chi Minh’s communist forces take over the entire country, an international conference in Geneva divided Vietnam temporarily into two sectors at the seventeenth parallel pending unification after national elections. The northern half was under Ho Chi Minh’s anti-colonial but
From Rights to Revolution

communist-led regime based in Hanoi. The southern part, swollen by thousands of Roman Catholic refugees from the north, was under a hastily organized western-oriented Vietnamese government in Saigon. Both sides claimed to represent the Vietnamese people and aspired to rule the entire country. Following the French withdrawal, President Eisenhower approved the continuation of U.S. military aid to the anti-communist Saigon regime and sent American military advisors to train the fledgling army of the so-called Republic of Vietnam in the south. Still arguing over the "loss" of China to Mao Zedong's communist regime, American politicians and policy makers feared a "domino effect" throughout southeast Asia if Vietnam and the rest of Indo-China were also to go communist.

Viewing the lingering French influence and American support of the Saigon regime as proof of continuing western colonialism, the Hanoi regime sought to expand its rule to the south. Supplied and encouraged by the Soviet Union and China, Ho Chi Minh mounted a combination of hit-run attacks by local Vietcong guerrillas and increasingly an all-out military campaign by the North Vietnamese army. In response the Kennedy administration increased military aid to the Saigon regime and dispatched more military advisors and eventually U.S. combat forces to assist in the defense of South Vietnam. Following Kennedy's assassination in late 1963, President Lyndon Johnson reluctantly stepped up the American military support of South Vietnam, trapped by his concern not to be the first American president to lose a war—in this instance the undeclared war to contain communism in southeast Asia.

Under President Eisenhower, American involvement in Vietnam had been limited to a few hundred military advisors. President Kennedy had increased these to about 16,500 by the time of his death in 1963. Feeling locked into an interventionist policy not of his making or wish, President Johnson none the less began a rapid and ever more extensive expansion of U.S. forces and warfare in Vietnam, though never as much as his generals believed necessary for a decisive victory. The effort was seemingly ineffective in a country where much of the largely peasant population had little concern for the domino theory or interest in helping westerners defend their land against other Vietnamese. American forces numbered 185,300 by the end of 1965 and 485,600 the following year, reaching a peak of 542,400 in January, 1969.3 By this time the United

States had dropped more bombs on Vietnamese targets than the Allies had delivered in all of World War II. Between 1964 and 1973, when the last U.S. soldier left Vietnam, about 27 million young men of what might be termed the Vietnam generation reached draft age. Of these about 11 million served for a time in the armed forces and more than 58,000 died in what turned out to be the country’s longest war. It was hardly surprising that by the late 1960s the war in Vietnam had become the most contentious and divisive issue in Madison and the nation.

The Rise of the New Left

The University of Wisconsin had for many decades attracted and encouraged an activist student body, which since the 1920s regularly included a sizable bloc of matriculants from eastern states. Many of these easterners were children of parents of varying leftist political persuasions and degrees of activism. These non-resident students, many of them Jewish, tended to be disproportionately active in campus politics and extracurricular affairs and more liberal-to-radical in their views than the great bulk of Wisconsin students. They helped give the University its worldly atmosphere, lively extracurricular life, and activist reputation. They also played a leading part in developing and shaping the anti-war movement on campus in the latter sixties.

As we have seen in the previous chapter, during the early post-war years UW student activists were concerned mainly with defending and expanding individual rights, including self-determination for students locally. They opposed racial and religious discrimination in local housing, campaigned against compulsory ROTC, scoffed at McCarthyism and red scare tactics, and in the early 1960s provided support for the burgeoning Negro civil rights movement in the south. UW students participated in the historic 1963 March on Washington, the Mississippi Freedom Summer voter registration project in 1964, and the Selma to Montgomery march the following year that generated

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massive public support for the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The interest in individual rights elsewhere in the country helped to fuel a successful campaign against restrictive University policies governing student life and extracurricular activities in Madison.

This focus on domestic concerns was reflected in the columns of the Daily Cardinal and the agendas of the student organizations of the period. An example was the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), which came to epitomize the so-called New Left of the 1960s. SDS grew out of the old socialist Student League for Industrial Democracy in 1960 and was initially concerned with such domestic issues as Negro civil rights, union organizing, disarmament, anti-poverty programs, and conversion of defense industries to peace-oriented production. SDS leaders were critical of what they saw as the sterile factionalism of the old-line leftist groups—what they called the Old Left—and sought to build a new activist student movement to reform and democratize American society at all levels. Especially in its early years the group attracted a number of talented graduate students, mostly in the social sciences and humanities, who produced some thoughtful critiques of societal problems. Although SDS leaders emphasized full participatory debate and collective decision-making, by the late sixties the organization had fallen victim to the very factionalism it sought to avoid. When SDS nationally was slow to adopt an active anti-war stance, local chapters and members were more militant in opposing the U.S. intervention in Vietnam as the single most important issue facing the country. By the latter 1960s some SDS members, especially the so-called Weathermen nationally and the Mother Jones Revolutionary League in Madison, were moving from protest to violent resistance and insurgency.

A small Madison SDS chapter was launched in 1962-63 under the leadership of a mathematics graduate student, C. Clark Kissinger. One of Kissinger’s early projects was mobilizing UW student support for striking auto mechanics at the Bruns Garage and Volkswagen dealership in Madison.\(^6\) The UW chapter continued to grow slowly, attracting mostly graduate students and meeting regularly for discussion of societal problems. During 1964-65 Kissinger served as the national SDS secretary in Chicago. The Madison SDS chapter was by then only one of several leftist student organizations on campus, overshadowed at

first by the older and more visible communist DuBois Club, the Young Socialist Alliance, and by the more broadly based Committee to End the War in Vietnam (CEWV) following its formation in the spring of 1965. As concern about the war deepened, UW students also took an active role in the statewide Wisconsin Draft Resisters Union (WDRU), which counseled young men about the selective service system and helped some objectors flee the country to avoid it.\(^7\)

Other activist groups had a more fleeting life, forming and fading in response to specific objectives and issues. The names of some of these mostly ephemeral groups recapture the protest fervor of the latter 1960s: the Committee on the University and the Draft, the Committee for Student Rights, the Committee against Army Recruitment, the Anti-Dow Coordinating Committee, the Committee for Direct Action, the Committee to Liberate the Southeast Area Dorms, the Committee to Defend Individual Rights, the University of Michigan-Berkeley Solidarity rally, the "C.I.A., Why? - Speak Out Teach-In," the "March against State Interference," the "Women Say Yes to Men Who Say No" march, and the United Campus Action political party. Though never the largest activist group, SDS came to symbolize the New Left at the University and to provide some of the more reasoned position papers and much of the leadership of a number of the more notable demonstrations. A favored gathering place for campus radicals in these years was the Rathskeller of the Memorial Union. Often they used the front steps of the Union as the starting point for their rallies and demonstrations. Other radical hangouts were the campus YMCA and the Nitty Gritty bar on Johnson Street.\(^8\)

\(^7\)UW student WDRU members gained considerable attention in 1969 when they organized a symbolic sanctuary for draft resister Ken Vogel in the First Congregational Church adjacent to the campus. Dozens of students joined Vogel in his vigil, all wearing name tags saying "My name is Ken Vogel," to frustrate any attempt by FBI agents to arrest him. Although supporting Vogel's anti-war stand, the church's moderator, William Bradford Smith, resigned in protest over the church ministers' open-door policy and the alleged immoral conduct of some of the overnight protesters. The congregation, however, voted to back the vigil. After more than two weeks Vogel was arrested for draft evasion. Daily Cardinal, September 17, 18, 23, 25, 26, 30, October 4, 11, 1969.

\(^8\)An unintended consequence of the heavy use of the Memorial Union by activists and counter-culture advocates was a corresponding decline in use by more traditional students, faculty, and townspeople. Historically, profits from food sales had helped to subsidize much of the Union's other programming, but by the end of the decade the reduction in food service patronage was seriously affecting the Union's overall budget. The opening of Union South in 1970 further aggravated the problem,
During 1965-66 the Madison SDS chapter became more active under the leadership of Martin Tandler, a history graduate student, sending speakers into the dormitories to generate opposition to the war in Vietnam. Moving from talk to action, SDS members played the leading role in organizing a week-long peaceful sit-in demonstration at the new administration building in May, 1966, to protest the military draft. It was the first student occupation of a building in the University’s history.

The rising student concern about the draft followed President Johnson’s decision not to order a general call-up of Army reserves or national guard units for service in Vietnam. This necessitated growing reliance on the selective service system to produce ever-larger monthly draft calls to meet the Army’s expanding Vietnam manpower needs. In 1965 President Johnson doubled the monthly draft calls from 17,000 to 35,000, and the figure later rose to 50,000 new draftees a month. The philosophy behind the selective service system was embodied in its name; the law was premised on a form of social engineering that exempted or deferred certain groups from being drafted because their current employment or studies were deemed more important to the nation than military service. Full-time students in good academic standing, for example, were at first automatically granted 2-S deferments while in school. UW administrators braced for trouble, but at first hoped the situation would follow the pattern of the Korean War when students had accepted the draft without incident. “I guess we really won’t meet any trouble,” UW Student Affairs Dean Martha Peterson told Joe Kauffman, her Madison campus counterpart, in late 1965, “unless there are inconsistencies in the application of draft calls.”

Indeed, most UW-Madison students initially supported the U.S. defense of Vietnam, which the Daily Cardinal called “a dirty, necessary war.” A poll conducted by the UW Survey Research Laboratory late in 1965 revealed that 72 percent of the student body gave unreserved support to American participation in the war and only 16 percent

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because it attracted the more conservative nearby agriculture, engineering, and meteorology students and faculty.

9James O’Brien “An Informal History of Madison SDS, or ‘Gee, Grandpa, I Bet You’ve Been Fighting for Progressive Causes Longer Than Anybody!’” unpublished draft article, SDS Collection, box 43, SHSW.

10Martha Peterson to Joseph Kauffman, November 29, 1965, Dean Joseph F. Kauffman Papers, UHP.

expressed disagreement.\textsuperscript{12} Student opinion began to shift, however, as the buildup and the fighting expanded and as draft calls increased. Since draft boards took older men in the 18-26 age pool first, graduate students were the most threatened if they lacked a student deferment, and were the most capable of organizing a resistance movement on campus. For UW student advisers, counseling male students about rapidly changing draft policies and regulations was once again a job requirement.

SDS leaders early recognized the value of the draft in expanding their base of student support. An internal SDS position paper noted in 1964 that the recent three-year congressional reauthorization of selective service provided a significant organizing opportunity:

Of all the issues which ought to allow for successful campus organizing programs, the issue of Selective Service would seem to have the widest possible base. Although Selective Service does not select college students, it selects large numbers of former college students, and it is a major problem confronted by all college males. . . .

The average American student has used all kinds of evasionary tactics to express his unhappiness with the draft and to keep out of the service. These anti-social tactics have had the net impact of causing the burden of conscription to fall on less educated groups. For the average fraternity guy to get into a movement to abolish the draft would be a recognition that the problem is social, not personal.\textsuperscript{13}

The rising draft calls seemed to underscore the validity of this organizing approach.

Campus concerns about the draft accelerated after selective service officials in Washington moved to tighten requirements for 2-S student deferments by reinstating the Korean War era College Qualification Test and requiring applicants to provide their local draft boards with official proof of their academic status and class rank. The intent was to reserve student deferments for more serious and committed students. Widespread concern over these announced changes enabled Madison SDS leaders to mount a protest and sit-in demonstration at the new administration building on May 16-20, 1966, two days after the first draft qualification test was offered on campus. Disciplined, orderly,

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., January 26 and July 19, 1966.

\textsuperscript{13}SDS Peace Research and Education Project, "Toward an Effective Peace Program on Campus," draft ms., SDS Collection, box 33, SHSW.
and peaceful, the sit-in protesters did not interfere with the employees or offices of the building. They simply demanded that the University "positively refuse to cooperate with the Selective Service Administration in any way" and "issue a statement condemning the use of grades, class rank, and other academic criteria in determining acceptability of young men for the draft." As SDS leaders had foreseen, by making opposition to the draft a societal and not a personal issue, they succeeded in attracting broad campus support for a demonstration they shrewdly allowed to proceed under the leadership of the more inclusive ad hoc Committee on the University and the Draft.

Endorsed by the *Daily Cardinal*, the Student Senate, and the Inter-Fraternity Council, the anti-draft protest also drew considerable faculty support. Working closely with President Harrington, Chancellor Fleming and his staff handled the protesters deftly, permitting them to occupy the building for five days as long as the sit-in remained peaceful and non-obstructive. After 27 faculty members petitioned for a general faculty meeting to discuss UW draft policy, Fleming promised a mass rally of students on Bascom Hill he would recommend that their representatives be permitted to address the faculty. "There are serious questions involved," he acknowledged, "and it will be useful for faculty and students to take a fresh look at them together." He persuaded the sit-in demonstrators to withdraw over the weekend so as not to appear to be pressuring the Monday faculty meeting when it considered the issue.

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14 Undated leaflet, "Why We Protest--Why You Should Join Us?"; Committee on the University and the Draft to President Harrington, undated, both in Series 4/19/1, Box 38, UA.

15 Conscious of the need to project an image of broad campus support, the committee protested to Chancellor Fleming about the negative coverage of its activities by the local Madison press, declaring that it resented such "smear tactics." "The use by these papers of photographs of bearded students, etc., and the disproportionate identification of *out-of-state students* misrepresents the university-wide student support for the movement, clearly indicated by the Wisconsin Student Association and the Inter-Fraternity Council's support of the movement." Richard Stone to Fleming, May 19, 1966, Kauffman Papers, UHP.

16 Remarks by Chancellor Robben W. Fleming, Lincoln Terrace, May 18, 1966, UW press release, UHP. At the rally campus area ministers read a statement signed by 15 of their colleagues endorsing the protest and commending the Student Senate for calling upon the University "to adjure any intermediary relationship between students and the Selective Service System." Statement, May 18, 1966, Kauffman Papers, UHP.

17 President Harrington's old department--history--played a large role in the anti-draft protest. Six of the nine protest leaders identified confidentially by Dean of Students Joseph F. Kauffman after the sit-in were history graduate or undergraduate
Much to the dismay of more militant students who called it a "betrayal," the nearly 900 faculty members present decided that while information about class standing should not be given directly to draft boards, it "should be available to the individual student on request." The meeting also authorized Fleming to cooperate with the Wisconsin Student Association in appointing a student-faculty committee to study University draft policy. A subsequent faculty meeting to consider this committee's report reaffirmed the decision to provide academic information to students on request rather than directly to draft boards and endorsed the current flexible system of deferments under a non-universal military draft. President Harrington also wrote President Johnson and the Wisconsin congressional delegation in Washington expressing his concern, and that of the larger University community, over inequities in the selective service system.

Among the faculty supporters of the protest, several senior history professors deserve mention because of their growing influence over student radicals in the next few years. One was William Appleman Williams, a World War II Annapolis graduate and navy pilot, who had studied U.S. foreign relations under Harrington after the war and replaced him in the department after Harrington moved into campus administration. Williams shared his mentor's emphasis on economic determinism in foreign policy, an approach appealing to young students; several history faculty members addressed the protesters sympathetically or used class time to discuss draft issues. Of the 27 faculty who signed the call for the special faculty meeting on May 23, 12 were members of the history department. The meeting was originally scheduled for the Social Science Building, but was moved to Music Hall to accommodate the 892 who attended. The proceedings were broadcast to the Great Hall of the Memorial Union for a large student audience. Both practices—ad hoc mass faculty meetings called on demand and broadcast proceedings for the benefit of student protesters—became increasingly common over the next several years. See Kauffman to Fleming, June 2, 1966, Series 4/19/1, Box 38, UA.

18UW Faculty Minutes, May 23, 1966, UA. It should be emphasized that in spite of the widespread campus support for the 1966 anti-draft demonstration, not all students agreed with the protesters. At the height of the protest one male student wrote Chancellor Fleming that the issue was not whether the University had the right to release information about grades and class rank to draft boards, but whether it had the right to deny him the privilege of having his information released, a view also expressed by a number of regents. See Elliott M. Friedman to Fleming, May 19, 1966, Kauffman Papers, UHP.

19UW Faculty Minutes, November 17, 1966.

20Harrington to President Lyndon B. Johnson, June 23, 1966, Series 4/19/1, Box 38, UA. An identical letter was sent to each member of the Wisconsin congressional delegation.
Marxists. Although not a pacifist, Williams was outspokenly critical of American involvement in what he considered a Vietnam civil war and was supportive of peaceful anti-war protests. Even more popular with student radicals was Harvey Goldberg, like Williams a UW history Ph.D. An unabashed Marxist, Goldberg was fascinated by leftist revolutions; students sometimes joked that no matter what the title of his popular lecture courses on social history he always featured violent uprisings and revolutions approvingly. A third history professor popular with student activists was George L. Mosse, a distinguished German-born expert on European cultural history. Mosse’s and Goldberg’s classes regularly attracted hundreds of students and filled the largest lecture halls on campus. Although Mosse was critical of the war, unlike Goldberg he stressed democratic values and opposed violence. By the end of the decade Goldberg had won the popularity contest with hardcore student radicals. It was to prove more than a little ironic that Harrington’s protégés in his old department helped to nourish the student demonstrations that eventually brought down his presidency.

There was widespread public approval of Harrington’s and Fleming’s peaceful handling of the 1966 anti-draft protest. A few critics complained that University authorities should have forcibly ejected the demonstrators, and some protest leaders and faculty continued to condemn any University cooperation—even indirect—with the selective service authorities. Most, however, agreed with the Milwaukee Journal’s assessment that the demonstration had ended peacefully because of “the good sense of the administrators and of the overwhelming majority of the students.”

President Harrington and Chancellor Fleming, upholding the UW’s long tradition of free assembly and dissent, kept cool, stated the university’s position firmly but calmly, listened to the protesters’ case and provided an honest airing of the dispute. The faculty has now backed the administration. Policies governing draft and selective service procedures will remain essentially unaltered.

The UW seems to have shown the nation that a student protest can be a legitimate exercise in democracy, not a disruptive episode in bitterness.21

21 Milwaukee Journal, May 26, 1966. The Wisconsin State Journal was similarly impressed that Harrington and Fleming had “showed the stuff that college leaders need today,” and added: “Madison’s police force may have felt frustrated, standing on the sidelines; but in their Monday morning quarterbacking they will have to admit that this was the university’s game, and that the university played it well.”
The Board of Regents shared this positive view, though several members questioned whether the administration's decision not to report class rank directly to the selective service authorities might not disadvantage some students in the draft.\textsuperscript{22} For himself, President Harrington credited the good judgment and coolness under fire of Chancellor Fleming and Dean of Students Joseph F. Kauffman with having averted a potential "catastrophe." The whole affair, he told Fleming, had strengthened the new chancellorship system, which was "now firmly established."\textsuperscript{23} As for Fleming, he told the faculty on May 23 that the key and unresolved issue was "whether we can maintain this University's great reputation for protest without coercion. So far we—and by 'we' I mean faculty, students, and Administration—have been almost alone among the great universities in our mutual willingness to tolerate strong differences of opinion among us without resorting to the kind of coercion which destroys a free society."\textsuperscript{24} It was a good question, with the answer unclear but soon forthcoming.

Because the University continued to cooperate indirectly with selective service authorities, the more militant anti-war protest leaders considered the outcome of the draft sit-in a defeat. Over the next few months they stepped up their agitation against the Vietnam War. In October a few militants broke up a Democratic Party rally at the Stock Pavilion and prevented U.S. Senator Edward Kennedy from speaking over their constant shouts and catcalls. The heckling of Senator Kennedy may have succeeded in its goal of publicizing the anti-war movement, but it was mostly negative publicity. The action was almost universally condemned on campus and around the state and nation. The Student Senate even voted to place the offending Committee to End the War in Viet Nam on provisional status and to monitor its actions in the future. With the example of the escalating Free Speech Movement at Berkeley very much on his mind, Fleming chose not to make martyrs of any of the protesters, though he recognized the stakes were rising. He warned the faculty:

There are some students who apparently believe that they alone have the truth, and that this justifies them in insisting that all others speak on their terms. A few such students


\textsuperscript{22}UW BOR Minutes, June 10, 1966, UA.

\textsuperscript{23}Harrington to Fleming, May 27, 1966, Series 4/19/1, Box 38, UA.

\textsuperscript{24}Press release, Remarks of Chancellor R.W. Fleming to a Meeting of the Madison Campus Faculty, May 23, 1966, Series 4/19/1, Box 38, UA.
seem determined to bring about a confrontation which will result in disciplinary action. Nevertheless, our tactics and our actions must not be geared to theirs.\textsuperscript{25}

Increasingly, UW administrators and the student protesters were acting on different premises and talking past each other.

On February 21, 1967, the Madison SDS chapter organized a march of about a hundred students to the Commerce and Chemistry buildings to protest job recruiting by the Dow Chemical Company, the leading manufacturer of napalm (jellied gasoline) bombs for the war. With the support of the faculty University Committee, Chancellor Fleming had previously warned against any obstruction of buildings or interview rooms by the demonstrators:

The University Administration has consistently taken the position that freedom on the campus is not divisible. If students who wish to interview a prospective employer can be prevented from doing so, they can also be prevented from hearing a speaker to whom some persons object. However, idealistic the motive, neither tactic is permissible on a campus which cherishes freedom.

The proposed action, if taken, will constitute an attack upon the University and will be treated as such.\textsuperscript{26}

The ensuing melee resulted in the arrest of two of the SDS leaders, both graduate students.

The following day several hundred protesters undertook an anti-Dow sit-in demonstration at the Engineering Building; University police arrested seventeen students when they refused to leave the Engineering Placement Office at the end of the day. The arrests mobilized additional student support for the protest, which Chancellor Fleming helped to defuse by announcing to a late-night campus rally that he had personally provided $1,155 in bail money for eleven of the arrested students who lacked funds to secure their release from jail. Fleming’s action was roundly criticized by some who favored a tougher law-and-order stance, but was, he explained afterward, designed to blunt the force of the protest and head off its escalation to the point of mass arrests. Besides, he thought it unfair for some of those arrested, several of them in his

\textsuperscript{25}Fleming, “Report to the Faculty on the Senator Edward Kennedy Incident, Madison Faculty Document 96, November 7, 1966. See also Fleming to John J. Walsh,” November 10, 1966, ibid., box 58.

\textsuperscript{26}Fleming, prepared statement, February 20, 1967; James R. Villamonte to University Committee members, February 20, 1967, Kauffman Papers, UHP.
view unsophisticated young undergraduates, to remain in jail when their wealthier fellows were able to make bail. "We've been close to another Berkeley," Fleming soberly told a large special faculty meeting the next day, which after discussion voted to endorse existing student conduct rules but to consider employment interview policy at a later meeting. 27 In a subsequent report to the faculty the chancellor said he was guided by his assumption "that the faculty wants to preserve dissent, but without anarchy, and that it wants order, but without repression." 28

The anti-war protesters clearly did not speak for the entire campus. The disapproving Daily Cardinal thought SDS and its noisy followers should "shut up, go home, grow up, and come back when they are able to deal effectively with the very real problems that the University faces." 29 A hastily formed We Want No Berkeley Here Committee mounted a rally against the SDS protesters that drew 800 students to the Bascom Theater. "This is the first time I haven't felt lonely in a crowd in days," Fleming told them. For deliberately mounting an obstructive and violent protest, the Student Senate voted 19-11 to decertify the SDS chapter as a UW-Madison student organization. The action was subsequently enjoined by the Student Court, thereby creating a constitutional impasse and no penalty, but SDS leaders decided they needed to build more student support before attempting other mass actions. 30

Privately, Chancellor Fleming boasted about his "pillow" strategy to handle the demonstrators: "students can punch the pillow but it moves over without greatly observable changes!" 31 President Harrington reminded the Board of Regents of similar demonstrations at many other universities and declared his intention to continue the University's long tradition of defending freedom of speech "even if the results are distasteful." While the University must itself be neutral, he cautioned, "it should not be neutral in the belief that young students should be involved in questions of public interest." 32 Perhaps because the more committed students believed such views patronized their deep anti-war convictions, tensions continued to mount during the remainder

27UW Faculty Minutes, February 23, 1967.
28UW Faculty Document 122, Fleming, "The Enforcement of Chapter II of the Laws and Regulations Governing the University of Wisconsin," March 6, 1967, UA.
30For a comprehensive day-by-day review of these events, see "Students Challenge Administration in Vietnam War Protest," WAM, 68 (March, 1967), 18-20.
31Fleming to Otto A. Silha, March 1, 1967, Series 4/19/1, Box 57, UA.
32UW BOR Minutes, March 10, 1967.
of the spring semester. There was another large anti-war demonstration against job interviewing by the Central Intelligence Agency, protests against the University’s trial pedestrian bridge across Park Street at the Memorial Union, and finally a mass blocking of west-bound University Avenue on the afternoon of May 17 to protest the city’s installation of a wrong-way east-bound bus lane, followed the next night by sporadic trashing of the windows of State Street businesses.\textsuperscript{33} The unrelated character of these demonstrations suggested that for some students, including increasing numbers of undergraduates, confrontation and mass action were becoming a preferred form of public discourse.

\textit{Chancellor Sewell’s Turbulent Year}

Robben Fleming departed for his new post as president of the University of Michigan in the late summer of 1967. He was succeeded as chancellor by Vilas Professor of Sociology William H. Sewell.\textsuperscript{34} To most of the faculty Sewell seemed an ideal choice. Largely responsible for building his nationally ranked department, he had been at the University since 1946 and was widely respected for his scholarship and his leadership of the campaign to open WARF research support to all segments of the faculty. He had, in fact, just been elected as chairman of the faculty’s prestigious University Committee. A distinguished demographer, he hoped to continue his active research program during his administrative service. Like Fleming and Harrington, Sewell was personally opposed to the U.S. intervention in Vietnam and like them was committed to maintaining an open campus. He argued that individuals but not universities were free to take a moral stand against the war. The editors of the \textit{Daily Cardinal} were inclined to give Sewell the benefit of the doubt. Paul Soglin, a self-styled radical columnist for the paper, applauded Sewell’s anti-war views and pointed out approvingly that on the University Committee he was “the one professor most sympathetic and responsive to the needs of the students.”\textsuperscript{35} As the new

\textsuperscript{33}The demonstration against the wrong-way bus lane on University Avenue followed a tragic accident in which a UW senior, Donna Schueler, lost her leg after stepping accidentally into the path of a city bus traveling east on the otherwise one-way west-bound thoroughfare. City authorities eventually agreed that east-bound buses, like other traffic, would have to use one-way east-bound Johnson Street, a block to the south, despite some inconvenience to their University passengers. \textit{Daily Cardinal}, March 3, May 6, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, 1967.

\textsuperscript{34}UW BOR Minutes, June 9, 1967.

\textsuperscript{35}\textit{Daily Cardinal}, June 23, 1967. See also ibid., July 14, 1967. A native of
chancellor prepared to take office, however, comments by members of the Board of Regents suggested that a vocal minority of the governing board was becoming impatient over the campus disorders and the apparent inability or unwillingness of the University administration to control the demonstrations and to discipline student and faculty offenders.\(^{36}\)

However promising its beginning, the Sewell administration lasted less than a year until the chancellor resigned on June 27, 1968, over his failure to restore order to an increasingly fractured and tumultuous campus.\(^{37}\) Things unraveled quickly during and following a second and more militant protest on October 18 against the return of the Dow Chemical Company for employment interviews. The Sewell administration had unwisely scheduled these in the Commerce Building in the heart of the campus. More numerous and more militant this time, the anti-Dow demonstrators crowded into the halls, disrupting classes as well as blocking access to the interview rooms. With University police unable to control the situation, Sewell authorized a call for reinforcements from the Madison city police, who used their billy clubs to remove the demonstrators from the building and eventually employed tear gas to clear the area. The action radicalized some previously uncommitted students and triggered a class strike the following day that was honored by large numbers of undergraduates and teaching assistants, especially in the College of Letters and Science and the School of Education. Harrington and Sewell suspended 13 demonstrators pending court action and disciplinary review; eventually a number of these served jail sentences and three were expelled. Responding to faculty concern about the handling of the Dow riot, the University Committee put together an ad hoc student-faculty committee chaired by law Professor Samuel Mermin to review the handling of obstructive demonstrations and campus employment interview policy.\(^{38}\) Such

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36 See the extended discussion in UW BOR Minutes, June 9, 1967.
37 Sewell to Harrington, June 27, 1968; Harrington to Sewell, June 29, 1968, Series 40/1/1-1, Box 143, UA.
38 Besides Mermin, the committee consisted of Professors J. Ray Bowen (chemical engineering), E. David Cronon (history), Haskell Fain (philosophy), Stephen C. Kleene (mathematics), Hugh T. Richards (physics), and Norman B. Ryder (sociology), all appointed by the University Committee; and an equal number of students
temporizing drew only sarcastic contempt from the more militant protesters:

Today the university faculty passed a momentous piece of legislation. In the wake of student disruption of the university's status quo and the riot squad's attack on the students, the faculty has taken decisive action. It has called for a committee. A committee to "draft recommendations" and review all the facts... The faculty was unflinching in its seizure of power from the administration.39

Much to the unhappiness of some regents, who believed the board had given a clear directive to continue on-campus job interviews, the chancellor postponed several other controversial interviews pending the report of the Mermin Committee. This headed off further anti-Dow (though not other) demonstrations during the year but probably fatally undermined Sewell's standing with an increasingly hard-line faction on the Board of Regents. Indeed, President Harrington felt obliged to defend Sewell before the angry regents after this action.40

Sewell also demonstrated independence from his old friend and patron, the president. When Harrington announced publicly he intended to recommend that the Board of Regents summarily fire Robert Cohen, a philosophy teaching assistant, for his obstructive conduct in the Dow protest, Sewell courageously rebuked the president. The regents, he declared in a press release the next day, should "not prejudge a person's guilt pending the final determination of his case." Cohen was entitled to full due process before any action was taken on his University employment, he said.

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39Pre History," undated, unsigned leaflet handed out October 23, 1967, Kauffman Papers, UHP. See also other assorted anti-Dow leaflets, ibid. Following what came to be known as Dow II, the Teaching Assistants Association published a thoughtful 61-page pamphlet, Strike, providing a detailed review and analysis of the major UW anti-war protests beginning with the 1966 anti-draft sit-in. It should be consulted for its useful time-line of the background events leading up to the obstruction of the Commerce Building on October 18, as well as its critical analysis of administration and faculty response. For a contemporary summary and some interesting photographs from an official University perspective, see "Day of Obstruction--The Dow Protest," WAM, 69 (November, 1967), 4-9.

40UW BOR Minutes, February 16, 1968.
The beginning of the Dow II protest, October 18, 1967. UA, X25-3384.

The end of the Dow II protest, Capital Times photo, UA, X25-3176.
I see no great danger to this University if Mr. Cohen continues performing his duties as a teaching assistant; if his rights are violated, however, this threatens all of us and the integrity of our institution. . . .

Thus I must affirm as a person, as a teacher, and as chancellor of this campus, that I find the recommendation that Mr. Cohen be dismissed before completion of due process unacceptable, and I intend to recommend to the regents that they avoid such actions that will damage the credibility, integrity and reputation of this fine University. Whatever the legal powers of the regents may be in this matter, they can best serve the University and our society by demonstrating to all a sense of wisdom and fairness in the heat of controversy.\textsuperscript{41}

The discomfited Harrington promptly issued a follow-up press release explaining rather lamely that of course he intended to recommend that the regents give Cohen "full opportunity for due processes in connection with the recommendation for his dismissal."\textsuperscript{42}

The president was obviously finding it difficult to respond to the demands of the University's many constituencies on and off campus, while also delegating authority (and responsibility) under the new chancellor administrative structure. One of his concerns was a bill introduced in the legislature two days after what was quickly called Dow II responding to the widespread perception that out-of-state activists were responsible for the recent violence. The bill proposed to limit non-residents to 15 percent of the total enrollment at any public university in Wisconsin and to establish certain priorities for their admission. It also noted gratuitously that "the faculties of the public university systems in this state are heavily dominated by persons not natives of this state," a veiled suggestion that perhaps legislation might be needed to deal with this problem, too.\textsuperscript{43} The State Senate quickly set

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\item[\textsuperscript{41}] UW News and Publications Service, Sewell press release, November 17, 1967, Series 4/20/1, Box 21, UA.
\item[\textsuperscript{42}] UW News and Publication Service, Harrington press release, November 17, 1967, ibid.. Cohen subsequently refused to attend his disciplinary hearing and was dropped as both a teaching assistant and a student.
\item[\textsuperscript{43}] Assembly Bill 1040, October 24, 1967, Kauffman Papers, UHP. The threat of legislative quotas on non-resident enrollment set off a flurry of expressions of concern and intense lobbying by University administrators, faculty and the state Coordinating Committee for Higher Education. For the fall of 1967, 29.6 percent of UW-Madison's undergraduates and 67.6 percent of its graduate students were non-residents. A 15 percent limit on non-resident students would have reduced their numbers by 8,203 and would have cut the University's income by $9 million. Such a limit would be especially
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up a select committee under the chairmanship of Republican Lieutenant Governor Jack B. Olson to investigate "the riotous and unlawful activities of the week of October 16, 1967, occurring on the Madison campus of the University of Wisconsin."\(^{44}\)

For the most part, Harrington was content to let Sewell and his aides handle the growing student unrest on the Madison campus, which the president saw as the first real test of his chancellor system. From Harrington’s perspective, one of the advantages of the new layered administrative structure was that he could be somewhat insulated from the more controversial happenings on the campuses. The difficulty was that he and the regents never spelled out the extent of the chancellors’ authority, and the board and the public held the president ultimately responsible for everything that happened in Harrington’s “single” university. Thus as Madison Vice Chancellor Atwell once shrewdly commented, “because survival is Fred’s dominant instinct and because he is an innately aggressive administrator, he will frequently intervene in the grossest kind of way if it suits him. I guess that is the Admiral’s privilege.”\(^{45}\)

The Crow Committee to consider how to respond to the WSA student power demands and the Mermin Committee to investigate the DOW riot reported late in the spring of 1968 after working simultaneously during much of the year and to some extent considering related and over-lapping issues. Although anti-war and especially anti-draft agitation had continued after Dow II, the existence of these two important student-faculty groups may have had a calming effect on the student body. So too did Chancellor Sewell’s quick response to the assassination of the widely respected black civil rights leader Martin Luther King in the spring of 1968. Sewell promptly suspended classes for a campus-wide memorial service, launched a program of scholarships for disadvantaged minority students, and appointed a committee under the experienced leadership of education Professor Wilson B. Thiede to consider how to improve race relations at the University and

damaging to the Madison Graduate School, which was indisputably a national, even international, resource and whose programs attracted students from all across the country and around the world. See CCHE #80, Informational Item, November, 1967, ibid.

\(^{44}\)Senate Resolution 13m, Senate Sub. Amendment 1 (1967). Student activists promptly filed suit in federal court to block this investigation on the ground that it would violate the first amendment of the U.S. Constitution. See Connections, November 27, 1967.

\(^{45}\)Atwell to Chancellor H. Edwin Young, September 17, 1968, Series 4/21/1, Box 1, UA.
increase its minority enrollment, course content, and services. These actions, coupled with the relatively small number of black students and the preoccupation of most student activists with the Vietnam War, helped head off the rioting that occurred elsewhere in the country after the King assassination. The most ominous event of the spring term was the firebombing of South Hall, the headquarters of the College of Letters and Science, in the early morning hours of May 19. The quick alarm sounded by an after-hours janitor confined the blaze to one room and limited the destruction to its furnishings and some student academic records. No group claimed responsibility and the crime was never solved, but the event suggested that some activists were moving well beyond rallies and picketing.

Although the faculty and eventually the regents accepted most of the recommendations of the Crow Committee on the student power question, neither the University Committee, the Madison faculty in a highly charged three-hour meeting, nor ultimately the Board of Regents accepted the major recommendation of the badly split Mermin Committee created to review the Dow riot. By a primarily student majority, the committee sought to assure University neutrality in the present highly charged atmosphere through “a moratorium on all employment and recruitment interviews on campus by outside agencies.” The decision as to when to lift the moratorium would be left up to the Wisconsin Student Association. The Mermin Committee consisted of seven

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46 Sewell to Bernard C. Cohen, E. David Cronon, Philip D. Curtin, Burton R. Fisher, Sterling Fishman, G.W. Foster, A.O. Haller, Robert J. Lampman, Michael Lipsky, Martin B. Loeb. Russell Middleton, Robert J. Miller, Walter B. Rideout, and Wilson B. Thiede, May 15, 1968; UW press release, May 16, 1968, ibid., box 18. It should be pointed out that one of the authors of this volume, E. David Cronon, was an appointed faculty member of the Mermin and Thiede Committees. He was also an elected member of the University Committee in 1969-72.

47 *Daily Cardinal*, May 21, 1968. One can only speculate as to the motivation behind the South Hall firebombing. The tactic had been used by black rioters in racial uprisings in Watts in 1965 and Detroit and Newark in 1967 and in many U.S. cities following the King assassination in 1968. The firebomb or “molotov cocktail” was also regarded by white student leftists as a cheap and easily manufactured weapon of proletarian revolution.

48 See above, pp. 442-46.

49 UW Faculty Document 191, “Report of UW-Madison the Ad Hoc Committee on Mode of Response to Obstruction, Interview Policy, and Related Matters,” March 13, 1968. The proposed moratorium may have had quiet backing from the chancellor. Sewell’s sociology department colleague, Norman B. Ryder, a Canadian citizen, was the chief faculty proponent of the moratorium within the Mermin Committee and privately kept Sewell informed of the committee’s deliberations. See “Norm” to
faculty members appointed by the University Committee and, in an unprecedented concession to the student power demands, seven students appointed by the WSA President and Student Senate. The latter group lacked a campus-wide perspective; 5 of the 7 students were from the College of Letters and Science, the campus unit with the least developed undergraduate placement services. The recommendation for the moratorium on employment interviews was adopted 8-6, with the majority consisting of 5 students and 3 faculty members. The remaining 4 faculty and 2 students submitted a lengthy minority report arguing that this important service to the student body should be continued. Michael Fullwood, the WSA president and a strong proponent of student power, applauded the Mermin minority’s support of continued University job placement services. “I must emphatically reject the Majority Report,” he wrote the University Committee. “It seems most clear to me that a majority of the student body favors the maintenance of the University Placement Service on the University campus. I do not think the rights and wishes of this majority can be ignored.”

Dow recruiters returned unmolested in the spring of 1968, but with Chancellor Sewell’s resignation in late June the campus braced for more uncertainty and likely trouble in the coming year. To a friend, Sewell explained, “The events of the year convinced me that I was the wrong man for the times and the situation at Madison.” The editors of the Daily Cardinal regretted any personal anguish the chancellor might

“Bill,” February 28, 1968, with Sewell’s notation, “Discussed with Ryder, 2-29-68,” ibid. In any event, Sewell had ample reason to know the Board of Regents was quite unlikely to accept any full or partial moratorium on campus placement interviews, since he had been brutally criticized by some of the regents for postponing controversial interviews after the Dow riot the previous October. See UW BOR Minutes, February 16, 1968.

50Michael D. Fullwood to Eugene Cameron, March 11, 1968, Series 4/20/1, Box 7, UA.
51Sewell to William Bevan, January 14, 1969, Series 7/33/8, Box 1, UA. When a friend at UCLA inquired whether Sewell might be open to another administrative post elsewhere, his response was enlightening: “I am not interested in any administrative job in any university at the moment. If I were ever to be tempted again, it would be as President of a university with a good Board of Regents and at a place where there was real campus autonomy so that I would have no administrator above me. The California, Wisconsin and New York mega-universities, with Presidents second-guessing Chancellors, are no place for men with independent spirits. It is bad enough to have to deal with students, regents, alumni, legislators, and the general public without having to do it according to someone else’s dictates and style.” Sewell to Richard T. Morris, July 29, 1968, ibid., Box 3.
have suffered during his year of turmoil, but agreed he was "certainly not the man for the job."

The kind of administrators which are needed on this campus are not liberal idealists—like Sewell or the also-retiring Dean of Student Affairs Joseph Kauffman. What we need here are shrewd manipulators.

Both Sewell and Kauffman deplored the nature of their positions in that they were required to act more as policemen than educators. . . . A considerable number of students consider the administrators' hands stained with blood, although these two suffered as much as any one else on that day.

What is needed is a chancellor who can do that kind of thing and not feel bad about it later. Or even better, one who can outwit the students as much as possible.52

New Leadership, Strategies, Problems

Sewell was succeeded as chancellor in September, 1968, by economics Professor Edwin Young, a labor relations specialist, long-time department chairman, and former dean of the College of Letters and Science between 1961 and 1965, when he resigned to become president of the University of Maine.53 Chancellor Young took office as student radicals adopted a major change in strategy. Discouraged by their inability to win support from a majority of the general faculty for University-wide action against the war, SDS leaders decided to abandon their efforts to build a student-faculty coalition. Believing that "militant confrontations are absolutely indispensable for building the movement on campus," though also recognizing that such tactics undermined "the delicate work of laying the groundwork for a movement in the community," they decided to concentrate on organizing undergraduates at the department level. The Madison SDS newsletter explained the new goal:

Beginning with the Dow demonstration of February 1967 and the subsequent Student Power debate, those segments of the faculty who had earlier expressed sympathy with the student movement cautiously began dissociating themselves from what they termed the new tactical and programmatic "extremes." Most student activists, however,

refused to recognize this turn of events. The splash of cold water (for many, though not all) came during and after the "Great Dow War" in October 1967, when the faculty—including "our friends"—repudiated the student movement and exposed themselves as bankrupt, i.e. adamantly liberal.

The October events clearly demonstrated that the student movement has left the faculty far behind, both in regard to program and willingness—"guts"—to fight. If the movement is to grow further, and if it is to grow in the right direction, it must completely abandon the old illusions about a common faculty-student movement. Indeed, it must recognize that the faculty, as presently constituted ideologically, are not only not on our side, but are our direct enemies. The student movement must turn away from the professors and concern itself with the only real campus constituency with a radical potential: other students, and in particular the undergraduates. . . . And to reach the masses of undergraduates, it is necessary to push the contradiction most relevant to their daily routine, the contradiction between student and faculty.54

Reflecting on the short-lived student strike after Dow II, another leftist analysis circulated widely on campus had similarly concluded:

Students as workers must first reach a certain stage of critical consciousness which understands in a fairly complete fashion the nature of repression in our educational factory and the necessary measures for freedom. . . . A real student strike would seek to change the basis of power in the university and society. UW strikers only pleaded with existing power for a fair deal. But given the conflict of interest between us and the irrational established power, there will never be freedom from fear and anxiety and force until strikers actively take over the means of established power or destroy that power through disruption of or withdrawal from the university.55

During the summer and fall of 1968 SDS formed student associations in a number of academic departments, mostly in the

54Abner Spence, "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People or We've Got to Reach Our Own People," The [Madison SDS] Call, vol. 2, no. 6 (April 5, 1968), 1-4, SDS collection, box 43, SHSW. See also Connections, February 5, 1969.

College of Letters and Science and the School of Education. In addition to their anti-war activities, the new student groups issued sweeping demands for curricular change in their respective departments, including abolition or at least modification of the grading system and major changes in course content, requirements, and teaching methodology. Above all, they insisted on a co-equal voice for students in shaping the new academic enterprise. Whether regarded as a natural extension of the student power movement or merely a clever tactic to alienate more undergraduates from the faculty, the effort was clearly intended more for building a revolutionary undergraduate base than for accomplishing serious academic reform. The trick, one of the student activists noted, was to steer a course between academic reforms “which the university can co-opt” and the larger and more important goal of developing “a radical consciousness which insists on the necessity of building a revolutionary movement to destroy imperialism and racism.”

A large-scale survey of UW-Madison graduate student opinion in the fall of 1968 revealed considerable support for protest activity and student power, though the latter was most commonly defined as greater student influence over the curriculum, grading policies, and University governance. The survey revealed little interest in outright student control, or in the hiring of faculty and administrators or service on departmental committees. While the respondents believed some of the student agitation should be directed against the UW administration, most thought the targets should be off campus—the U.S. government and society in general. Few had a negative view of the faculty and in fact most believed the faculty should have the most important role in setting University policy. Most viewed student demonstrations positively, though less than half had ever participated in any kind of student protest, and 71 percent agreed the recent demonstrations had not disrupted their education. Support for various protest tactics varied considerably. More than 90 percent approved of circulating petitions and participating in rallies and over 70 percent supported picketing. Less than half supported class boycotts and only a quarter approved of

56 The SDS chapter sought to radicalize freshmen and other new students through a 36-page Student Handbook, published in 1968 and sold for 10¢, which offered a critical analysis of the University and stressed the “powerlessness” of UW students. It also introduced newcomers to the activities of various left-wing campus groups.

57 Jeff Herf, “Schizophrenia and Revolution,” HSA Newsletter, undated [fall, 1968], 2, UHP.
sit-ins. While about half condoned non-violent civil disobedience, the respondents overwhelmingly opposed violence and thought students who disobeyed UW regulations should be punished by the University. Interestingly in view of the numerous campus demonstrations against job recruiters, more than half supported this University service. While most respondents opposed both the draft and classified military research at the University, about three-fourths favored voluntary ROTC.\(^{58}\) Although there are no comparable data about the views of UW undergraduates at this time, the survey suggested that SDS activists had their work cut out for them.

As SDS leaders had anticipated, even in departments where there was a good deal of faculty sympathy for student anti-war activities, most faculty members were unwilling to relinquish control over instruction, grading, and related academic matters. Over the next few months a number of departments made good faith (and usually short-lived) efforts to create mechanisms to provide for a greater voice for their students in departmental deliberations, but these were derided by SDS as meaningless and insulting tokenism. The noisy campaign for greater student involvement in departmental affairs had an effect, however. Increasingly in the eyes of many undergraduates, the faculty now joined the administration as the enemy, unwilling either to confront the evil of the Vietnam War or to join with students in reforming the University.

The first of the departmental student groups, and the prototype for those following in other departments, was the History Students Association (HSA), formed over the spring and summer of 1968. By the end of the year there were more than a score of these departmental student associations. Besides the HSA, among the more active student associations were those in the Departments of Economics, English, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, and the School of Education. There was also an association of radical science students. As the first and most ambitious of the new student groups, the experience of the History Students Association is worth detailing here. The history department provided fertile ground for SDS-sponsored academic reform in 1968-69, as it had experienced explosive enrollment growth during...

\(^{58}\) Vice Chancellor Bryant Kearl to Edwin Young, undated, enclosing UW Survey Research Laboratory, Graduate Student Survey, Fall, 1968, Series 4/21/1, Box 42, UA. The survey involved 556 graduate students in the humanities and social sciences in the College of Letters and Science: 338 non-residents (U.S. but not Wisconsin) and 218 Wisconsin residents.
the 1960s. By this time the department was overwhelmed with more than 650 graduate and 900 undergraduate majors, by far the largest number of any department in the University. Especially at the undergraduate level these numbers were more than the over-worked and under-manned history faculty could handle well. SDS activists correctly assumed these potentially disaffected students were ripe for organizing against their increasingly factory-like educational experience. The department faculty also included several political radicals and a larger number of liberals, at least some of whom the student activists presumed would be supportive of SDS objectives.

Comprised initially of less than a half-dozen SDS members, HSA made its presence felt at the very first history faculty meeting of the 1968-69 academic year. History chairman E. David Cronon had called a special meeting on short notice in order to advise the faculty of a confidential report passed on by Chancellor Young warning that radical students were apparently planning to disrupt some classes—including perhaps in history—the following Monday, the first day of the new term. Young thought the faculty should be alerted to this possibility. Cronon preferred to pass on the information verbally rather than by memo so his colleagues could discuss various options. When the faculty members arrived for the meeting, scheduled in a vacant departmental classroom, they found a small group of students present. Cronon informed them the room was about to be used for a faculty meeting. Responding that they represented the new History Students Association, the students declared their intention of participating in all faculty meetings. Their chief spokesman, Malcolm Sylvers, one of Harvey Goldberg’s leftist graduate students, declared that inasmuch as they and the faculty alike were students of history, the student members of the department now demanded co-equal status in determining department policy. Not wanting either to establish a meeting precedent or discuss the rumored class disruption in front of the students, Cronon declined to call the faculty meeting to order as long as students were present. After some fiery speeches and a ten-minute standoff, the student group departed, vowing to return for future faculty meetings.59

59Besides Sylvers, the student group included undergraduates Mark Rosenberg, Billy Kaplan, and Francesca Freedman. Sylvers had very likely been informed of the unscheduled meeting by his major professor, Harvey Goldberg, the most radical of the senior history faculty. Goldberg had not alerted Cronon to the planned HSA intrusion, so it was ironic that his was the only history class to be disrupted by radical students the following week. For the HSA account of this confrontation, see Francesca Freedman,
This set the pattern for the rest of the year, with HSA students, most of them SDS members or sympathizers, attending departmental faculty meetings and noisily attempting to inject themselves into the discussion. In response, the department developed a rule that only faculty members could speak at department meetings unless one of the faculty present requested permission and received unanimous consent from the group for a limited student presentation. Because the HSA activists in reality constituted only a small proportion of the history majors, a more moderate rival group calling itself the History Students for Reform (HSR) soon organized. HSR students rejected SDS-style confrontation and violence but shared a number of the HSA goals for reforming the department and enlarging student participation in its affairs. The difference between the two groups was more one of style and tactics than of substance.\(^{60}\)

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\(^{60}\) The announced goals of the History Students Association were: (1) governance of the University by students and faculty, including within the history department “equal authority of students and faculty”; (2) elimination of “the coercive tool of grading by abolishing the grading system” and substitution of “a mutual evaluation process”; (3) freeing students “from the coercive condition of financial insecurity by providing support for all students for the duration of their education”; (4) establishing “the primacy of teaching in the University by eliminating the pressure to publish and instituting a policy of hiring and firing teaching faculty on the basis of their teaching”; (5) making learning “a cooperative experience by instituting the teaching contract option, by which students and teachers decide on what they want to learn and teach, and by what means”; (6) abandoning survey courses to “allow students to take an active role by exercising their intellects on historical problems”; (7) changing the relationship of the University to society by increasing enrollment of minority and poor and working class students, using University resources for progressive ends such as expanding the School for Workers, providing aid for “those underdeveloped countries striving for independence from imperialism,” and severing University connections with the defense establishment. History Students Association, *Critique and Program* (Madison: History Students Association, September, September, 1968), pp. 32-40. See also History Students Association, *Up against the Blackboard* (Madison: History Students Association, December, 1968), both in UHP.

The program of the rival History Students for Reform was less overarching but similar in some concerns: (1) student voting rights in department meetings and committees; (2) a student voice in faculty hiring, promotion, and firing; (3) emphasis on teaching rather than research; (4) a student bill of rights; (5) the right of students to determine with the instructor the structure and requirements of a course; (6) review of
To facilitate more orderly student input into department policy, Cronon and the history faculty created two student-faculty committees, one with three elected graduate student majors and the other with three elected undergraduate majors. To assure the widest possible student participation in the election, the department organized and paid for a mail ballot to choose the student representatives, confident the SDS-sponsored History Students Association did not speak for most of the history majors. The more moderate HSR slate swept the balloting, with an HSA representative winning only one of the six seats.61 This rebuff did not end HSA efforts to participate in and disrupt department meetings, however, since the SDS goal was to radicalize the student body. In an attempt to maintain order, the frustrated history faculty eventually decided by a vote of 24-16 to permit only the elected student representatives to attend faculty meetings, a policy abandoned a year later after a court case involving the English department questioned the legality of closed faculty meetings.62

The English department in fact experienced even greater turmoil during the latter sixties than did the history department. Because all undergraduates were required to take at least one and sometimes two semesters of Freshman English, the department needed a large staff of teaching assistants and junior faculty to teach the many sections of

the present grading system and consideration of alternatives; (7) use of graduate students to teach new courses desired by students; (8) review of the department’s policies for financial support and teaching assistantships; (9) recruitment and support of minority students; (10) formation of an active organization of history majors, which would produce a handbook describing and evaluating history courses; (11) initiation of a History Department Newsletter; (12) a history student-faculty lounge. HSR leaders explained that their organization was open to all students “who want change in the History Department but reject the idea that reform can only be achieved by rash actions or disruption of classes” in contrast with “history student associations whose commitment extends to chimerical schemes of revolutionizing society by radical techniques.”

History Students for Reform, “Program of Action,” undated [October, 1968], UHP.

61Daily Cardinal, October 25, 1968. The lone HSA undergraduate representative was SDS activist William “Billy” Kaplan. The two student-faculty committees functioned with increasing difficulty for several years, but then lapsed because students found it difficult to recruit representatives willing or able to devote any substantial time to departmental administrative matters. The department then followed the practice of adding one or more students to ad hoc faculty committees dealing with issues of particular interest to its student majors.

62“In their attempt to resist the flow of social change,” unhappy HSA leaders declared after the history department’s ban, “the history department has . . . clearly acted ahistorically.” Daily Cardinal, March 7, 1969. See also ibid., March 12, 14, 20, 25, April 1, 1969, February 14, 1970.
English 101 and 102. As the anti-war and student power protests mounted, department meetings grew increasingly tense and noisy, with students joining untenured junior faculty members in challenging the leadership of the senior faculty. A substantial part of the Freshman English staff became disaffected and radicalized, to the point where in 1970 the department’s faculty majority concluded they had lost control of these two courses. They thereupon voted to abolish English 102 and to restructure English 101 into a remedial course to be taken by a small minority of entering freshmen clearly needing to improve their writing skills. This set off a curricular crisis outside the department that is discussed in Chapter 5.63

One of the demands by student activists in history, sociology, English, and a number of other departments was for a revision of the grading system, which the radicals claimed was coercive and constituted a barrier to true learning for its own sake. A few faculty members agreed with this basic proposition; others were troubled by the role grades had come to play in determining student draft status during the Vietnam War. For a variety of reasons, therefore, under student pressure a small number of faculty members across the University unilaterally adopted different grading policies during 1968-69. The history department, for example, discovered that several of its more radical faculty members were giving mostly A grades, thus essentially converting the regular grading system into an unauthorized pass-fail system. Because grade point averages played a significant role in awarding departmental honors, fellowships, and graduate assistantships, such unilateral experimentation had ramifications far beyond the particular course. In a stormy department meeting, a majority of the history faculty voted that any future deviation from the established University faculty-approved grading system must have prior departmental approval. The department also decided to annotate the transcripts of students in one history course offered the previous semester to explain

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63See above, pp. 289-94. Two of the more militant campus protest leaders were English junior faculty: Assistant Professors David Siff and Francis Bataglia, both of whom were eventually let go by the department. The deep split among the English faculty was reflected in the annual vote for department chairman in 1970, several months after Siff had been notified that his appointment would not be renewed. After five ballots the result was: Charles Scott, 31; David Siff, 16; Robert Kimbrough (put forward as a compromise candidate), 14; abstention, 1. Inasmuch as Siff was effectively ineligible to serve as chairman, the Siff voters were simply showing their disdain for their elders. *Daily Cardinal*, April 22, 1970.
that it had not been graded on the regular basis and all students had received the passing grade of A.  

Assistant Professor Michael A. Faia of the Department of Sociology was a prominent faculty leader in promoting the grading revolution. Faia’s refusal to use the conventional grading system led his senior colleagues to take over the grading of his courses in the summer of 1968 and was a factor in their decision not to renew his appointment a few months later, an action bitterly protested by the radical Sociology Student Association. The rampant grading experimentation during 1968-69 led the University Committee to appoint an ad hoc committee on grading, which eventually recommended increased flexibility but continuation of the existing letter grade system. A lingering consequence, at Wisconsin and elsewhere in the country, was the general inflation of grades and decline in grading standards during the latter sixties. This was more pronounced in the humanities and social sciences than in the more scientific and technical fields.

Variations of the history department’s often traumatic experience in dealing with its newly energized graduate and undergraduate students occurred in a number of departments during 1968-69, but

64Ibid., October 24, 1968, and February 5, 8, 1969.
66UW Faculty Minutes, November 4, 1968; UW Faculty Document 276 and Faculty Minutes, October 6, 1969; Daily Cardinal, November 15, 16, 19, December 12, 1968, May 24, October 7, 8, November 21, 1969. See also above, pp. 287-88.
67It is difficult to determine the extent to which grading standards changed during the quarter century covered by this volume, though there was a widespread feeling on the part of faculty members that both faculty expectations and their grading standards had declined. During this period the campus shifted from a 3 to a 4 point grading system and introduced several modifications that make it impossible to compare average student performance over time. One of the concerns about the grading changes introduced by the Buck Committee in 1971 was that the new intermediate grades of AB and BC, far from increasing precision in grading, would merely add another inflationary element. An ad hoc committee on grading in the College of Letters and Science commented: “Our intuitive judgment suggests that the trend toward ‘easier grading,’ where the C is treated as the D now is, the BC as the C, etc., is possible. In this committee’s judgment, grading standards have already eroded too much. However, we cannot impose standards and we doubt that any grading system, no matter what symbols are employed, can solve the problem. Obviously this issue deserves further attention.” Preliminary Report of the College of Letters and Science Committee on Implementation of the New Grading System, undated [1971], Series 4/31/5, Box 15, UA.
generally over shorter periods and usually with less confrontation and bitterness. For many UW faculty members the year was one of unprecedented student unrest. The assertions of student power at the department as well as the campus level was a challenging and often unpleasant experience with which they were quite unaccustomed. From New York, where he was a visiting scholar at the Russell Sage Foundation for the year, former Chancellor Sewell watched with dismay, telling an Arizona sociologist in the fall of 1968:

I am particularly troubled by what is happening at the department level. I have always advocated student participation in university decision making. However, I do not think our students should have the major voice in department policy. Our students have been organizing and making the most unrealistic demands on the department. They not only want to be heard on curricular matters, a position which I share with them, but they are also demanding equal determination of budget and promotions to tenure. While I, of course, know that they are demanding much more than they expect to get, I find their tactics outlandish. I doubt that those of us who have grown up in the gentlemanly tradition, which has governed universities in modern times, will be able to adapt very readily to the new style of student faculty relations.  

Meanwhile, anti-war demonstrations of an increasingly disorderly nature continued. Ralph Hanson, the UW police chief, reported 20 arrests in November, 1968, up to that time “an all-time high” in the number of students arrested by his force in any month. “This seems to me,” he told his supervisor, “a sad reflection on our changing campus environment and certainly a matter for increased concern.”

**The Black Student Strike**

The widespread agitation for academic reform during the fall of 1968 prepared the way for broad support by white students of a strike by black student activists early in the second semester. After growing agitation throughout the fall, leaders of the student Black Peoples Alliance issued first eight and then thirteen “non-negotiable” demands, including greatly expanded recruitment of minority students, faculty,
and administrators, more black-run minority support services, and most important the creation of a black studies department in which black students would have co-equal responsibility for curriculum and staffing. The strike followed immediately on the heels of a student-organized symposium on the Black Revolution at which some of the speakers had advocated violent protest.\footnote{Daily Cardinal, November 22, 26, 27, December 3, 5, 1968, and February 4, 1969; Connections, February 5, 1969; Black Students undated strike flyer [1969], SDS Collection, Box 43, SHSW. One of the saddest of the demands, yet symptomatic of the black power movement, was for the replacement of Ruth Doyle as the head of the so-called Five Year Program of academic and financial assistance for disadvantaged minority students. Mrs. Doyle had started the program in 1966 and had since worked primarily with black students to help assure their academic success. Although black militants agreed she was "a beautiful person," they demanded her replacement simply because she was white. In the face of this opposition she resigned the directorship of a program the Ford Foundation had described as one of the three best in the nation. Daily Cardinal, May 10, September 21, November 7, December 3, 11, 1968, February 4, 1969.}

The strike reflected both the growing militance of blacks nationally, including strikes by black students on a number of other campuses, and the impatience of some Madison black students with the progress of the Thiede Committee, appointed by Chancellor Sewell to deal with such issues after the assassination of Martin Luther King the previous spring. Ironically, the success of the strike, itself a manifestation of the growing movement for black separatism and black power, depended on substantial support from the predominantly white student body. This was provided by an unlikely coalition of disaffected groups: liberals concerned with righting America's lingering legacy of slavery and racist oppression, academic reformers, anti-war and anti-draft activists, the newly energized Teaching Assistants Association reacting to a current legislative proposal to end the remission of non-resident tuition for graduate assistants, and a number of influential undergraduate organizations including the WSA Student Senate and the Daily Cardinal.

Disruption of classes and growing violence by the strikers and their supporters, estimated to number at times as many as eight to ten thousand demonstrators, soon overwhelmed the UW police force, Madison city policemen, and county sheriff's deputies attempting to keep order on and around the campus. At the request of President Harrington, Chancellor Young, and Madison Mayor Otto Festge, Governor Warren P. Knowles took the unprecedented step on February
Chancellor Edwin Young meeting with demonstrators during the black strike, February, 1969. UA, 3512-J-1.

National Guard troops on Bascom Hill, 1969. UA, X25-2062.
12 of calling out the state national guard to keep the University open and functioning. The initial 900 guardsmen were subsequently augmented by another 1,000, and some of this state force remained on campus until February 21.\textsuperscript{71} The legislature reacted angrily to the turmoil at the other end of State Street. With little opposition the assembly adopted a resolution calling for the expulsion of any student blocking access to a University building, while the senate passed a bill by an overwhelming 29-1 margin denying state financial aid for two years to any one convicted of offenses during campus demonstrations.\textsuperscript{72}

The strike and resulting turmoil exceeded the wildest dreams of student revolutionaries. At a press conference Chancellor Young promised that the University would remain open, emphasizing that "the state of Wisconsin is more powerful than the demonstrators." The \textit{Daily Cardinal} rejoined: "This University moved closer to self-annihilation Thursday, as its withered soul continued to be bartered away for dollars and votes, by an ignorant, self-serving governor and legislature, an unmoving chancellor, and a silent president."\textsuperscript{73} Even after the national guard was withdrawn, a substantial police presence remained in the campus area. Altogether during the turmoil, 36 students were arrested and 3 suspended by order of the Board of Regents. Much to the disappointment of student demonstrators who had misjudged the support from some younger and more radical faculty members, an impressive 1,372 faculty signed a quickly circulated petition backing the University administration's "refusal to surrender to mob pressures."\textsuperscript{74}


\textsuperscript{72}Ibid., February 14, 1969.

\textsuperscript{73}Ibid., February 14, 1969.

\textsuperscript{74}Unhappy First for Wisconsin," "As Students Reported It," and "The Blacks' Demands and the Chancellor's Reponse," \textit{WAM}, 70 (March, 1969), 4-7, 9, 14-15, 24, 27; \textit{Daily Cardinal}, February 18, 1969. Reacting against the turmoil in their department during the year, a substantial number of history professors signed the petition. This led \textit{Connections}, a lively New Left campus periodical edited by several history graduate students to complain that the department was emotionally invested in appearances and lacked proper scholarly detachment from the strike. "What the vast majority of history faculty apparently cannot understand," the paper declared, "is the essentially historical nature of the crisis which grips us, and the futility of expecting the development of that crisis to conform to its preconceived notions of social assimilation." \textit{Connections}, February 25, 1969. Eventually U.S. District Judge James Doyle, whose wife Ruth directed the University's program for disadvantaged minority students, reinstated the three suspended students on the ground the regents had not provided adequate due
This impression of faculty unity was misleading, however. At a tumultuous mass faculty meeting called by petition on February 19 to discuss the strike and the black student demands, by a vote of 518-524 the faculty only narrowly defeated a motion calling on the administration to reverse its decision not to admit three black students expelled from Wisconsin State University at Oshkosh for participating in a violent demonstration there.  

The black strike put great pressure on the student-faculty Thiede Committee on Studies and Instruction in Race Relations to finish its final recommendations on ways to improve University services to minority students. The key unsettled question was the strikers’ demand for an autonomous black studies department in which students would have an equal vote with the faculty on curriculum and staffing. After extended debate the committee was unable to reconcile its differences on this issue. A narrow majority recommended creating a new Department of Afro-American Studies with its students having a substantial,  

process. President Harrington quickly deplored this limit on campus disciplinary authority: “We are seriously handicapped by Judge Doyle’s ruling in our efforts to take quick and decisive action to protect the university and its community from those who would disrupt or destroy it.” Daily Cardinal, March 19, 1969.  

The admission of the expelled Oshkosh students was one of the thirteen demands of the striking black students. Indicative of the great faculty concern about the campus turmoil and the presence of the national guard, this unprecedented meeting drew about 1,300 faculty members to the Memorial Union Theater with another 150 participating by closed circuit television in the Wisconsin Center dining room. Students could listen to the proceedings in rooms B-10 Commerce and 6210 Social Science. Another indication of the importance of the meeting was the unusual presence of President Harrington, who thanked the faculty for its petition supporting the administration in opposing disruption and obstruction, declaring that “there had perhaps been no comparable expression of faculty opinion in the history of the University.” The president explained that he and Chancellor Young had agreed it was necessary to call in the national guard and promised that the University would remain open. Those who disturbed its activities would “be punished under University and Wisconsin regulations with all proper protection under due process procedures.” The University’s tradition of faculty power was being threatened, he warned, and he called on the faculty “to live up to its responsibilities, to listen to students, but not allow them to take over control of the University, or force the Regents or Legislature to punish the University by financial reprisals or by reducing faculty power.” UW Faculty Minutes, February 19, 1969; Daily Cardinal, February 20, 1969. Actually, the decision not to admit the expelled Oshkosh students was made by Harrington, not Young, though the latter may have agreed with it. The president realized, far better than the black students or their faculty supporters, that neither the regents, the legislature, nor the public would tolerate UW-Madison’s admitting students simply because they were black if they had been expelled for violent conduct at another Wisconsin university.
though not controlling, voice in its affairs. The minority filed a dissenting report, arguing it would be wiser policy and in keeping with traditional practice to start with an inter-departmental academic program using an initial nucleus of existing faculty and courses and under regular faculty control. Such a program might begin immediately and could evolve into an academic department as it matured and gained experience and strength.  

Following further campus disruptions, the general faculty took up the Thiede Committee’s recommendations on March 3 at another tense mass meeting in the Union Theater, with an overflow group participating by closed circuit television from the Wisconsin Center auditorium. On the key issue of whether to create an interdepartmental black studies program or a new academic department, either one offering a black studies undergraduate major, the faculty eventually voted 540-414 in favor of starting a new department, one in which students would have a representative but not co-equal voice. Because students would not have equal authority in the new department, many of the demonstrators agreed with the *Daily Cardinal* that the Thiede proposals were “utterly unacceptable,” “an insulting compromise,” and “only token efforts” toward a needed broader reform of the curriculum. Mixing metaphors with hyperbole, the paper likened the faculty to “a flock of lemmings” marching blindly to the sea, “morally bankrupt, politically impotent, and intellectually emasculated. . . . But the sea is advancing to meet us—the tide is coming in,” the *Cardinal* warned. The black strike thus managed to combine black power with broader student power concerns, and its aftermath brought the further radicalization and estrangement of a sizable part of the student body. As it turned out, the

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77 UW Faculty Minutes, March 3, 1969. There was a preliminary indication that some faculty members planned to amend the majority Thiede Committee recommendation to accept the black student demand for co-equal authority in the affairs of the new department. Chairman Thiede headed off this move by quietly letting it be known he would then change his vote and lead the opposition to his committee’s narrow majority recommendation for a new department, throwing his support behind the minority recommendation for a more traditional interdepartmental program. With the outcome of the debate so much in doubt, proponents shelved their amendment. As finally approved, the new department was to be organized initially by a steering committee consisting of seven faculty members and two students appointed by the chancellor after consultation with the dean of the College of Letters and Science where the department would be located administratively. UW Faculty Document 260a, March 3, 1969.
faculty's refusal to grant equal or even substantial student authority in organizing the new Department of Afro-American Studies was a major factor in the subsequent development of a strong program of black studies at Wisconsin, sooner than at universities like Harvard where at about the same time the faculty capitulated to similar black power student demands.  

Another outcome of the black strike was as predictable as it was unwelcome to University administrators and faculty members. Increasingly convinced that much of the student unrest was imported, that non-Wisconsin students were playing a disproportionate role in campus protests, some members of the Board of Regents moved to set further limits on out-of-state enrollment. One of the regent hardliners, Dr. James Nellen of Green Bay, demanded information on the geographical distribution of out-of-state applications the previous fall, and especially the percentage of successful applicants from Illinois, New York, and New Jersey. The prospect of such enrollment restrictions, also being discussed in the legislature, was deeply disturbing not only to student leaders but also to the faculty. If applied to the Graduate School, such restrictions would devastate most UW graduate programs, which drew students from across the country. Thirty-six concerned L&S departmental chairmen promptly wrote Dean Leon Epstein, warning that curtailment of out-of-state enrollment would seriously damage the University and their academic programs:

Given the context of our times, and the absence of any serious attempt to defend the proposal to restrict nonresident students on its merits, we can only conclude that this is a punitive response directed at radical and activist students, if not at the University community itself. If this be the motivation, it is misdirected, for it punishes the vast majority of responsible students and many innocent youth who aspire to attend the University of Wisconsin without altering the probability of student activism. While we strongly favor the application of appropriate discipline to those who violate University regulations, the proposal to limit out-of-state enrollment does not effectively address itself to this problem.

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The state legislature also reacted to the recent campus violence and vandalism, with the senate launching a formal investigation. To the dismay of the editors of the Daily Cardinal, an early casualty was the University’s biennial budget request. Speaker Harold Froehlich, the conservative leader of the Republican-controlled assembly, introduced five bills intended to forestall future disruption. The measures provided that (1) any student convicted of a crime arising out of a campus disruption at a state institution was ineligible for readmission for a year; (2) anyone using amplified sound equipment on a campus, if its effect was disruptive, could be punished by a fine of $100 or 30 days imprisonment; (3) university chancellors and presidents could designate periods when a campus and its facilities were closed to people other than students and staff; (4) any student convicted of a crime involving obstructive behavior, or who had been expelled or suspended, would be guilty of a misdemeanor if he returned to the campus; (5) the conduct of any member of the academic staff of a state institution of higher learning who was convicted of a crime involving obstructive behavior must be reviewed by the appropriate board of regents, which might dismiss the offender, who thereafter could not be rehired without the express permission of the board.

Testifying before the legislature’s Joint Education Committee, President Harrington endorsed all five assembly bills, explaining that the new legislation was needed in view of calls for renewed campus violence. “We at the University have given a great deal of leeway to people who want to protest certain policies,” the president declared, “but we have always opposed violence and actions which interfere with the rights of others.” Having made this tactical move to the right, Harrington urged the legislators not to enact proposed drastic curbs on non-resident enrollment, leaving that determination to the Board of Regents and the state Coordinating Committee for Higher Education. Governor Warren Knowles, with significant legislative assistance from his brother, state Senator Robert P. Knowles, managed to head off the most damaging anti-University bills. Still, the recurring turmoil, reflected in a violent block party in the Mifflin-Bassett Street student ghetto over the weekend of May 3-4, was undermining support for the University and its leaders in the legislature and around the state.

The black strike was the largest mass student action yet, involving at times over three weeks as many as eight to ten thousand 1969.

81Ibid., March 6, 1969.
demonstrators and considerable property destruction on and off campus. Student radicals were surely satisfied at this tangible evidence of their influence. James Rowen, a columnist for the increasingly leftist Daily Cardinal, cautioned, however, that the upheaval did not constitute a true revolutionary movement. "The strike was broken not by the Guard and the cops," he pointed out, "but by the lack of strikers' solidarity and especially the professors' refusal to join."82 The latter was a continuing problem for the radicals, because violent protests eroded faculty support. Nor was it clear that the ambitious SDS effort to radicalize and organize students at the department level was building a lasting revolutionary movement. James O'Brien, an SDS organizer and UW history graduate student, gave a frank appraisal of the departmental organizing campaign to a national SDS leader in the spring of 1969. "I'm not sure what all this adds up to," O'Brien concluded. "It's next fall that will determine whether the department organizing will be permanent and if so whether it's a viable tactic for radicals. I'm much less optimistic than I was."83

Violent Revolution

In the year ahead student activists redoubled their efforts and came closer to achieving their goal, if not of triggering a full-blown revolution, at least of destabilizing the University and the larger society. Ending the Vietnam War became the overriding objective of increasing numbers of students in Madison and around the nation, and they grew more and more disillusioned with the seeming unresponsiveness of political and campus leaders. At the same time, student radicals fragmented into competing groups differing over anti-war tactics and their wider goals. While the war and the draft were unifying themes, otherwise there was wide disagreement over whether the solution required a thorough-going revolution and what its nature should be. In Madison, Students for a Democratic Society largely abandoned the departmental organizing campaign of the previous year, concluding that its results were mixed and too limited. The campus SDS chapter suffered from the same divisions that shattered its parent national organization following the street violence at the 1968 national Democratic convention in Chicago. Some UW SDS members shared the

83James P. O'Brien to Carl Davidson, April 26, 1969, SDS Papers, Box 43, SHSW.
violent outlook of the national SDS Weatherman faction and began calling themselves the Mother Jones Revolutionary League. They often helped spark the window-smashing and trashing that increasingly accompanied anti-war rallies and protest marches during 1969-70. Whereas such tactics had earlier been condemned by the editors of the Daily Cardinal and other student leaders, now they were more and more accepted as legitimate weapons against the agents and symbols of U.S. imperialist oppression.

Indeed, what distinguished the Madison protests in 1969-70 was their often violent and disruptive character and the justification, if not active participation, by many students and by the increasingly radical Daily Cardinal. "Tear up the country," Rennie Davis, an SDS leader and chairman of the National Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam, urged 1,300 freshmen at an SDS-sponsored "unorientation" meeting in the Union Theater at the start of the fall semester in 1969.\(^{84}\) New Left groups played a major role in planning UW activities in connection with a national anti-war moratorium on October 15, 1969, designed to build support for a march on Washington a month later. Chancellor Young rejected an ultimatum issued by local SDS leaders demanding that the University terminate its ROTC programs and the Land Tenure and Mathematics Research Centers.\(^{85}\) The Land Tenure Center of the College of Agriculture studied the effect of land ownership policies in developing countries. Since it received funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development, it was viewed by student radicals as an instrument of American imperialism. The Mathematics Research Center had regularly been funded by an ongoing contract with the U.S. Army since its establishment in 1956. Its permanent faculty sometimes consulted at Army installations but most of their research was highly theoretical and unclassified. Like any pure mathematical work, it might have military or other applications, however. James Rowen, a radical Daily Cardinal columnist, published a series of polemical articles attacking the center as part of his larger condemnation—labeled "Profit Motive 101"—of the University's alleged support of the U.S. military-industrial complex.\(^{86}\)

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\(^{84}\) Badger Herald, September 18, 1969.

\(^{85}\) Daily Cardinal, October 16, 1969; Badger Herald, October 17, 1969.

\(^{86}\) Daily Cardinal, March 11, 12, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20, 21, 28, May 14, 20, 22, August 5, 15, October 3, 12, 15, 1969. Rowen's anti-MRC research was summarized in a lengthy pamphlet distributed by SDS at campus rallies supporting the moratorium. Howard Halperin, James Rowen, David Siff, and Ed Zeidman, The Case against the
The day before the Vietnam Moratorium two women students—both SDS members—were arrested after disrupting an international MRC seminar on graph theory at the Wisconsin Center. They had thrown red paint at the speakers and participants to symbolize their indirect support of the war. More than fifty meetings took place on campus on Moratorium day, and some faculty and teaching assistants devoted their classes to a discussion of the war. The event culminated with the largest campus rally yet, a packed Field House crowd estimated at 15,000. Among other speakers Jim Rowen denounced the myth of a neutral university: “It is up to you—the people—in this community, primarily the students and faculty, each and every day to militantly confront the warmakers and their cohorts on this campus.”

Rowen’s editors agreed, with the Cardinal going so far as to declare that the continuing presence of ROTC and the Land Tenure and Mathematics Research Centers on campus was not only “reprehensible” but “intolerable.” Another Cardinal staffer, Leo Burt, rejected the complaint of cynics that leftists had been co-opted by allowing WSA, peace groups, and other liberals to take over the leadership of the October moratorium. He called for 10,000 Madisonians to join the November anti-war march on Washington, “a brand new opportunity for the left to assume its responsibilities and make its presence felt . . . to demand the US out of Vietnam and an end to Empire.”

The largely peaceful nature of the October Moratorium and declining campus interest in the November Washington march stimulated some activists to take more direct action. In late November 300-500 students joined a noisy march around the campus waving North Vietnam flags and denouncing ROTC and University military research. SDS leader Billy Kaplan termed the action “the beginning of building

Army Math Research Center, Series 4/2/11, Box 36, UA.

87Daily Cardinal, October 15, 21, 1969. The two students, Margo Levine and Linda Stern, withdrew rather than face University disciplinary charges, but the Board of Regents nevertheless decided to sue them for $5,000 damages to Wisconsin Center furnishings. Ibid., November 12, 1969.

88Ibid., October 23, 1969. Following the Field House rally a large part of the crowd marched silently in the rain down State Street to the state capitol to conclude their anti-war protest.

89Ibid., October 17, 1969. The paper subsequently denounced campus administrators for not negotiating with SDS over its ultimatum and declared that the University’s silence was “another proof of the invaluable role Universities play in maintaining American foreign and domestic policy.” Ibid., October 28, 1969.

90Ibid., October 21, 1969.
a movement."\textsuperscript{91} A smaller SDS group, disdained by some activists as crazies, charged into several UW offices wearing Army fatigues and brandishing toy machine guns. In early December SDS teams entered some of the larger lecture classes to mobilize students against the evils of American imperialism. Three SDS members were arrested after failing to leave and allow Professor Stanley Payne to teach his freshman European history survey course.\textsuperscript{92} On Friday, December 12, a larger SDS march smashed windows in scattered campus buildings and attempted unsuccessfully to firebomb T-16, a well-guarded building housing the Air Force ROTC program, after which they seized thousands of student identification cards in the Peterson Building.\textsuperscript{93} An SDS leaflet announcing the rally had promised, "The War Is Coming Home."

Also moved to take direct action was a 25-year-old Madisonian and sometime UW student named Karleton Armstrong, who had been a participant in the T-16 march. When Armstrong had enrolled in the University in 1964 he was a thoroughly square young freshman, warned by his eastside father to shun campus politics. He signed up for Air Force ROTC, went out for crew, and enrolled in courses for an intended major in nuclear engineering. An indifferent student, however, he was soon on academic probation. He changed his major several times and twice dropped out while continuing to live in the student ghetto and maintaining his campus associations. Armstrong was increasingly radicalized by contacts with Rathskeller Marxists and active participation in the anti-war movement. Something of a loner, he had concluded by late 1969 that marches and rallies would never suffice to persuade the U.S. authorities to end the war. What was needed was more forceful action to cripple the American war machine.\textsuperscript{94}

After the campus emptied for the Christmas break, Armstrong returned alone to T-16 at 4:00 a.m. on Sunday morning, December 28, carrying two gallon jugs filled with gasoline. He smashed a window in the rear of the building, tossed in the jugs, and threw in a match. An alert agriculture student hurrying to work at the milking barn heard the

\textsuperscript{91}Ibid., November 20, 1969.
\textsuperscript{92}Ibid., December 10, 11, 12, 1969. Payne’s teaching assistant, Brian Peterson, was reassigned after calling the professor “a pig” for using the campus police to restore order, and the University promptly secured a restraining order against further SDS disruption of classes.
\textsuperscript{93}Ibid., December 13, 1969.
glass break, noticed the flames, and turned in a fire alarm. By the time
the fire trucks arrived the flames had mostly died out after scorching the
cement floor and damaging some furniture. Using a pay phone,
Armstrong alerted the new underground newspaper Madison Kaleido-
scope and claimed the firebombing as the work of what he called the
Vanguard of the Revolution.95

Armstrong's next move three days later was far more daring. On
New Year's Eve he persuaded his younger brother Dwight to steal a
small airplane from the Morey Airport in nearby Middleton and help
him bomb the Badger Ordnance plant at Baraboo, which was manufac-
turing gun powder for the Vietnam War. It was a risky and harebrained
scheme, because a snowstorm was developing and Dwight had never
sooloed before, let alone flown at night. Still, they managed to reach the
plant and drop Karl's homemade bombs—three large mayonnaise jars
filled with a mixture of ammonium nitrate fertilizer and kerosene. The
bombs failed to explode because Armstrong had not realized they
needed an explosive ignition device. The two brothers then managed to
land safely at the deserted Sauk Prairie airport, where Karl’s girl friend
Lynn Schultz was waiting with her car’s headlights illuminating the
darkened runway. This time Karl attributed the bombing attempt to a
mysterious New Year’s Gang. It was not until after the somewhat
skeptical Kaleidoscope printed a story about the attack that police and
Badger officials discovered the unexploded ANFO bombs.96

Frustrated that his anti-war campaign had gained little attention
or results, early on Saturday morning January 3, Armstrong tossed a
gallon vinegar jar filled with gasoline through a window in the old Red
Gym on Langdon Street. Used primarily for recreational sports, the
building also housed the Army ROTC program. The jar shattered
against a brick wall inside, and the gasoline easily ignited when he

95Ibid., pp. 154-56; Madison Kaleidoscope, January, 1970. Mark Knops, the
editor of Kaleidoscope, quoted the unidentified caller as warning: "The policy of our
group is to increase the level of violence against both on-campus and off-campus
institutions of repression. On the campus, our activity will escalate until the University
administration accedes to the demands of SDS and other student power-oriented groups.
The level of violence will be raised until either these demands are met or the University
physical plant is destroyed and the institution shut down."
had not exploded, Karl had trouble convincing the press that the bombing attempt had
actually taken place. Eventually after several anonymous telephone calls he persuaded
Kaleidoscope to publish a report of the attack. Only then did the police and employees
at the Badger Ordnance plant discover his makeshift bombs.
tossed in a flaming newspaper. This time Karl succeeded in setting off a major conflagration in the historic building, which burned unnoticed for two hours before a security guard reported what quickly became a three-alarm fire involving eleven fire engines before the blaze was extinguished. The arson attack was featured news around the state, though ironically the ROTC offices in the rear of the building escaped the flames. The following night Armstrong attempted to firebomb the unmarked selective service headquarters on Capitol Court but mistakenly hit the nearby UW Primate Laboratory instead. Researchers working inside quickly turned in an alarm and the fire was extinguished with minimal damage. Shaken by this miscue, Armstrong decided to call a halt to what he called his winter offensive against the war.97

When students returned for classes after the Christmas break, the recent firebombings dominated campus discussion. Notable was the reaction of the Daily Cardinal, which abandoned its past stance against violence and in an editorial titled “The End of the Road” applauded the unknown bombers:

There are some, perhaps many in the movement who see one and only one way of renewing and strengthening the fight for change. Several of those people, whoever they are, were responsible for the firebombings of the Red Gym, the Primate Lab and the State Selective Service headquarters in the last four days. They call themselves the Vanguard of the Revolution. They are indeed. They have chosen to initiate direct action. They have chosen to show to those both in and outside the movement that the immobile and repressive position taken by this nation can only be countered head on in the streets with bombs and guns.

It is a new phenomenon on this campus, that the very men who have passed the repressive laws, called in the National Guard, summoned Dane County Sheriffs and refused to listen at all to calls for change, are now very much against the wall, trembling not only for the safety of their institution but for their own safety as well. We can have no sympathy for them. They are receiving the inevitable product of their actions.

If acts as those committed in the last few days are needed to strike fear into the bodies of once fearless men and rid this campus once and for all of repressive and deadly ideas and institutions then so be it.98

This endorsement of terrorism, the first in the country by a college student newspaper, received national press attention and condemnation. The president of the Board of Regents thought the board should consider ejecting the paper from the campus. The upstart Badger Herald, the new weekly student paper created the previous fall as a conservative response to the increasingly leftist Cardinal, soberly warned that firebombing was “dangerous business,” because of the likelihood that people could be hurt even if the bombers’ intent was only to attack property. Most Madison peace organizations, the officers of the Wisconsin Student Association, and even the radical Young Socialist Alliance also denounced the bombings. An exception was SDS, whose members voted to endorse the recent violence as “a blow against the day-to-day terror perpetuated around the globe by the ruling class system of American imperialism.” The radical Kaleidoscope likewise applauded the New Year’s Gang, even publishing a cartoon showing how to make a molotov cocktail. “The bombings were PROPAGANDA BY THE DEED,” the paper declared, “acts of resistance designed to create a mass movement.”

Early in the second semester a fragmented SDS, supported by the Daily Cardinal, began organizing against the General Electric Company, a war contractor some of whose workers were currently engaged in a strike marred by violence. Other campus leftists and peace groups joined to support a February 12 rally against the visit of GE recruiters. “G.E. Off Campus,” proclaimed the Cardinal:

We urge all students to attend the rally. It will be a unique and important opportunity to confront what in a symbolic sense may . . . be your next employer. It will be a crucial time to say no to the dissemination of a destructive technology, to say no to the worker and consumer abuse, to say no to exploitation of blacks and women and people of the third world.


101Bates, Rads, p. 184; Daily Cardinal, January 9, 1970. One SDS member explained, “These were revolutionary acts, and I never thought I’d see the day when the Daily Cardinal would be more revolutionary than SDS.”

102Kaleidoscope, January 14, 1970.


104Ibid., February 12, 1970.
Repulsed by tear gas employed by police guarding the engineering placement office, hundreds of anti-GE protesters then went on an unprecedented destructive rampage across the campus and up State Street, smashing windows and spray painting leftist graffiti such as the slogan “New Year’s Gang—Live Like Them!” scrawled on the campus YMCA building. Later that night someone firebombed the Kroger’s supermarket on University Avenue, the largest grocery store in the immediate campus area.\textsuperscript{105} \textit{Cardinal} columnist Jim Rowen exulted over this evidence of developing revolutionary spirit:

> The students successfully integrated G.E., ROTC, AMRC, Krogers’, Devine and others into the one system which they constitute. Combining understanding and action, students hit their precisely defined oppressors harder and longer than ever before in this city—and that is revolutionary.\textsuperscript{106}

Karleton Armstrong was likewise inspired by the anti-GE violence in Madison, which had occurred while he was hiding out at his uncle’s home in Minneapolis. He decided to return and mount another attack against the Badger Ordnance gunpowder plant. This time he would cut off its electric power by dynamiting one of the generators at the Wisconsin Power and Light Company’s nearby Prairie du Sac hydroelectric substation on the Wisconsin River. Unaware of Badger’s emergency backup generators, he fashioned a crude bomb of thirteen sticks of dynamite and blasting caps purchased in Minneapolis. His girl friend Lynn Schultz drove him to the power plant a little before midnight on Sunday, February 23. Placing the bomb proved more difficult than Armstrong had anticipated, because the generators area was both lighted and protected by a high barbed wire fence. Cutting his hand getting over the fence, he succeeded in placing the dynamite under a transformer, but had not yet connected it to a twelve volt automobile battery when he realized he had been observed by a plant watchman. Unnerved, he hastily scrambled over the fence and into Lynn’s waiting car, leaving his disabled bomb and battery behind where they were quickly discovered by WPL employees. It was another Armstrong


fiasco, but Madison leftists were heartened by news of the return of the New Year’s Gang, the Vanguard of the Revolution.107

The TAA Strike

While his physical plant staff was busy replacing broken windows and watching for more firebombs, Chancellor Young was trying to head off a threatened walkout by many of the University’s graduate teaching assistants. Organized by a small group of TAs in late June of 1966 in the aftermath of the anti-draft sit-in, the initial stated goals of the Teaching Assistants Association (TAA) were mostly of the bread-and-butter variety designed to improve the pay and working conditions of UW teaching assistants.108 Although there was some radical rhetoric and talk of using the strike weapon, the group’s first president, philosophy graduate student Warren Kessler, discounted such tactics at least initially, warning “there are scads of students who need our jobs.” Later the TAA emphasized its origin in the anti-war and anti-draft protests and its concern for educational reform.109 The TAA at first attracted little support among graduate students because of its peculiar blend of traditional trade unionism and leftist social action.

TAA membership soared, however, after Representative John C. Shabaz, the assembly’s Republican majority leader, introduced a bill during the black strike to terminate the traditional remission of non-resident tuition for out-of-state graduate students holding assistantships. The bill was part of a larger conservative effort to reduce the number of non-resident students at the University, who were believed to be responsible for much of the campus unrest.110 In response, the TAA sent

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107 Ibid., February 24, 1970; Bates, Rads, pp. 200-206. Armstrong left behind some valuable evidence if he were ever apprehended—human hair on the tape holding the dynamite together and a bloody thumb print. The bomb’s components were commonly available, however, and the technology did not yet exist for a general search of fingerprints on file, let alone DNA analysis of hair fibers.

108 By far the best account of the early history of the TAA is Craig, “Graduate Student Unionism.”


110 Daily Cardinal, February 5, 7, 8, 12, 13, 20, 21, 1969; Connections, February 5, 1969, supplement, p. 3, February 25, 1969. Shortly after the introduction of the Shabaz bill, the Republican-dominated Board of Regents voted to reduce the level of out-of-state freshmen students to 15 percent of the total by 1971-72, from the current limit of 25 percent. Faculty concern helped prevent the restriction from applying to graduate enrollment, which was about two-thirds from outside Wisconsin. As things
membership cards to all 1,900 TAs promising to fight the Shabaz bill and proposing that the organization be designated as the exclusive bargaining agent for campus teaching assistants. Although faculty members told their graduate students the bill had little chance of passage and they believed University administrators had been assured in any event that Governor Knowles would veto it, within a few weeks the union claimed to have signed up approximately 1,100 members.

Emboldened by the new strength of their organization, TAA leaders demanded that the University engage in collective bargaining and negotiate what would be the first employment contract with unionized graduate assistants in the country. At first Chancellor Young refused, citing the absence of legislative authorization. When a strike over the issue seemed likely in the spring of 1969, Young agreed to begin bargaining provided the TAA’s claim of majority support was confirmed in an election supervised by the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission. The chancellor, whose academic specialty was labor relations, was later criticized severely by many faculty members for taking this action on his own authority, but his background had conditioned him to the belief that labor disputes ought to be channeled through an orderly negotiating process. 111 The union subsequently won 77 percent of the WERC-supervised balloting on May 15-16, gaining majority approval in 52 of the 81 campus departments employing teaching assistants. 112 Collective bargaining thereupon began under a

111 Young later came to believe that in view of the unstable radical union the TAA became, his decision to recognize and bargain with it was probably a mistake. “We gave in too much,” he acknowledged to a group of labor relations scholars in 1980. In a subsequent oral history interview he noted his concern not to let his difficulties with the teaching assistants undermine the University’s traditionally strong support from the state’s organized labor movement, which might not identify with the TAA but would support the right of any group of employees to form a union. “I wasn’t concerned about the TAs,” he said. “I was concerned about our continued relation with the rest of the labor movement. . . . So that was the game all along—not to let our TA thing damage our relationship with bona fide trade unions.” Craig, “Graduate Student Unionism,” pp. 118-19.

112 There were 1,835 teaching assistants eligible to vote across the University; of these 1,209 valid ballots were counted, with 931 voting for the TAA and 278 for “No Union.” Although the TAA needed to win only a majority of the votes cast, it also won a narrow majority of the total eligible voters. In 21 of the 52 departments voting for the TAA, however, affiliation was decided by a minority of the department TAs. Ibid., pp. 124-25 and Appendix B, pp. 454-55; Andrew Hamilton, “Wisconsin: Teaching Assistants’ Strike Ends in Contract Signing,” Symposium (Logan, Utah: Utah State
path-breaking Structure Agreement under which the University agreed to recognize and negotiate with a union of graduate students.

Bargaining proved more difficult than Chancellor Young and the University’s bargainers anticipated, owing largely to the inexperience, suspicion, anti-establishment ideology, and transitory character of the TAA team. The University team was headed by Neil Bucklew, a recent industrial relations graduate, who had been hired after the faculty members and administrators involved in developing the Structure Agreement realized how time-consuming the bargaining process was likely to be.\textsuperscript{113} Because the TAA prided itself on participatory democracy, it declined to name a permanent bargaining team. Instead, team membership shifted constantly, regularly necessitating a review of past discussion and decisions. The union also encouraged its members to attend and observe the bargaining, sometimes leaving the UW bargain-
ers wondering just who constituted the TAA team. A confidential TAA memo distributed to its bargainers and stewards after the first negotiating session laid down the union’s strategy for the negotiations:

1. Convince yourselves that nothing new or significant will be forthcoming from the other side of the table.
2. Members of the bargaining team, stewards and other TAs should understand that because this process is a new undertaking for the TAA and because it is necessary for you to be aggressive at the table, some mistakes will be made along the line.
3. Convince yourself also that the guys on the other side of the table may be nice guys when they’re at home with their families, but as representatives of the managements of this University, they’re real bastards who are out to screw you.
4. Distinguish clearly between what is meant by tentative agreement on an item by item basis and package bargaining.

\textsuperscript{113}Bucklew was assisted by a large policy committee, also called the Committee of Thirty, consisting of a representative from each department employing fifteen or more TAs in the spring of 1969. A smaller and more manageable Council of Ten provided a core of bargainers drawn from the largest TA-using departments in the College of Letters and Science (chemistry, economics, English, history, mathematics, psychology, speech, and zoology), plus a member each from the School of Education and the College of Engineering, and three ex officio associate deans (two from L&S and one from the Graduate School, who also as faculty members represented English, German, and Spanish and Portuguese, all heavy TA-employing departments). Craig, “Graduate Student Unionism,” pp. 137-39.
5. When they make bullshit proposals, you ought to make it clear to them that you consider them so.

6. Probably the biggest thing you have going for you is the fact that you’re assumed to be radical graduate students, knowing little about the bargaining process and very skeptical that it works at all in meeting your needs. . . . Take advantage of the skills you’ve learned in the University environment: be extremely skeptical of anything they suggest, break down everything they suggest into small components that are easy to understand and can be criticized, question their assumptions, make them explain why they are interested in some item or reject another. . . . Save the rhetoric for times when either reporters are present, or someone from the central administration is present, or when you want them to believe that they are causing the negotiations are breaking down [sic].  

Gaining agreement with the TAA over the terms of an employment contract also proved elusive because of the union’s broad agenda, which mixed traditional bread-and-butter demands with more ideological academic and human rights issues. The TAA sought to gain greater job security for its members through a guarantee of renewed appointments during the duration of an individual’s graduate career up to ten years, a limit on the number of students in TA-taught courses, sick leave, and health benefits. It proposed that the performance of TAs be evaluated by department committees consisting of one-third students, one-third teaching assistants, and one-third faculty, rather than by the existing departmental faculty committees. TAA members argued this new approach would be a suitable model for the evaluation of faculty members as well. Recognizing that job security depended on funding, the union demanded to be involved in deciding on legislative requests, resource allocation, and budgeting. Some of the demands raised faculty.

114Confidential. For Distribution to TAA Stewards and Bargaining Team Members Only. Comments on the TAA-University Administration Bargaining Sessions—May 28, 1969,” quoted in Craig, “Graduate Student Unionism,” pp. 140-41. Craig speculates that the memo was written by James Marketti, a TAA leader and industrial relations graduate student, one of the few union members with a background in collective bargaining. Her review of the notes for thirty-three bargaining sessions showed thirty-five different individuals identified as representing the TAA, of whom eighteen attended only one session. Another twenty-nine TAA representatives were not identified by name in the notes. Although four TAA bargainers participated in twenty-seven or more sessions, under the circumstances it was difficult for the University bargainers to build a sense of rapport with their constantly shifting opposite numbers. Ibid., p. 139.
eyebrows, such as the union's proposed environmental standards specifying the size and form of TA office space and furnishings, including lighting levels, color, upholstery, leg clearance for desks, and atmospheric and acoustic requirements. Faculty members who typically shared typewriters and cramped office space in buildings some of which dated back to the early years of the University could only shake their heads in amused disbelief. Adding up all of the TAA demands, John Schmitt, the skeptical president of the state AFL-CIO, concluded the money "just wasn't there."\textsuperscript{115}

More contentious was the TAA's emphasis on several human rights and educational planning issues designed at least in part to win support from undergraduate and graduate students outside the union. Arguing that "much of the structure and content of University education reflects and perpetuates an inequitable society through forms of explicit and de facto discrimination," the TAA demanded that the University and the union work to end discrimination "through hiring, admission and education policies," areas traditionally considered the faculty's domain. Even more controversial was the demand that each academic department engage in collective bargaining with the TAA to establish mechanisms giving students and teaching assistants a decision-making role in the educational planning of all courses employing TAs.\textsuperscript{116}

These ideological issues threatened faculty authority over departmental staffing and instruction and consequently undermined support for the TAA among most UW faculty members and even within the traditional labor movement. In fact, Schmitt, the head of the state AFL-CIO, recommended dropping the educational planning demand on the ground that it was not a proper union issue.\textsuperscript{117} TAA leaders responded that their organization was different. "If America is to be changed, it should be obvious that our generation is going to have to do the changing," declared a TAA newsletter. "What a parody of progress it would be for us to march backward eating bread and dusty butter as

\textsuperscript{115}\textit{"Teacher Aides Press Participation Demands,"} \textit{Milwaukee Journal}, March 13, 1970, in ibid., p. 120.

\textsuperscript{116}Hamilton, "Wisconsin: Teaching Assistants Strike," pp. ii-iii.

\textsuperscript{117}\textit{Daily Cardinal}, March 13, 1970. The \textit{Cardinal} cautioned the TAA not to yield on educational planning. "If they sacrifice the educational reform demand, if they get 'realistic' as Schmitt says they must, they are a bread and butter union. If they are a bread and butter union those of us who are committed to real change in this society, those of us who want control over the lives we lead so that we may begin to attack some of the vital problems this country is ignoring, those of us who have supported them thusfar, must withdraw our support and move on our own." Ibid., March 14, 1970.
we drag the polluted and competitive present into a lost socialist and democratic future.” Equally important, the educational planning issue was also an important means for the union to mobilize undergraduate support. Although University negotiators at one point put forward an educational planning clause, faculty opposition forced its withdrawal.

By early 1970 the bargaining was at an impasse. The TAA directed its team to conclude bargaining by January 8, after which, failing settlement, the union would take unspecified action. It eventually set a strike deadline for March 15. There was a flurry of further bargaining from March 11 through the late hours of March 15, until TAA leaders announced that the membership had rejected the University’s latest contract proposal and were now on strike. Before this, the University administration had taken steps to prepare the campus for the first strike by any of its instructional staff in its 121-year history. L&S Dean Stephen Kleene, whose college employed most of the campus teaching assistants and where TAA membership was strongest, wrote his department chairmen on March 10 reminding them of the faculty’s obligation to continue teaching and setting down procedures for determining which TAs were not teaching and should be removed from the payroll.

. . . I have been quite amazed that queries came to me from TAs and faculty whether they would forfeit pay by going out on strike. The Chancellor has spoken on this; but it shouldn’t have been necessary. No employee in a labor union—that is, any ordinary labor union—expects to be paid by his employer when he is out on strike, nor does he expect it to be concealed from his employer that he is striking. Which brings me to the even more astonishing circumstance that there are those—TAs and even faculty—who have suggested that they would regard as provocative such steps as the University needs to take to determine which of its employees are working during a strike.119

Aware that the by-now thoroughly radical Daily Cardinal was unreservedly supporting a strike,120 the campus administration relied on

120On March 7 a Cardinal staff member explained why students should support a TAA walkout: “The TAA strike is the one chance that we have, as graduate and undergraduate students together, to gain the power which would allow us to control a
the University news service's *Campus Report* to inform students and staff of the University's side of the dispute. In a "Special Issue on the TAA Strike" on March 10, Chancellor Young appealed to the TAA leadership to reconsider. The head of the University bargaining team, Neil Bucklew, explained "What's It All About?" by reviewing the areas of disagreement and discussing the positions taken by the two sides. A major communications problem was that few students saw Bucklew's report; most got their information about the strike issues from their teaching assistants and the *Daily Cardinal*. And now the TAA's emphasis on mandatory participation by TAs and students in educational planning and departmental staffing paid off in mobilizing undergraduate support for a strike.

"On Strike" headlined the *Cardinal* on Monday morning, March 16, 1970, promising, "Today we are going to close this University down." In response Chancellor Young denounced the strike as both illegal under state law and in violation of the TAA's own commitment at the start of its bargaining with the University. He pointed out that state labor leaders had declared the University reasonable and responsible in its negotiations with the TAA and noted that Local 171 representing UW blue collar workers had told its members to ignore the strike and report to work as usual. Young's lengthy statement was carried both by the *Cardinal* and the new tabloid *Campus Digest* launched by the campus administration to disseminate official University statements and reports about the dispute. The staff of the *Daily Cardinal* (whose press was now owned by the University and which printed *Campus Report*) objected to printing what it saw as a rival strike-breaking paper. The University therefore used the state printing division to produce *Campus*
Digest for free distribution to students and staff. Young also established a telephone rumor center to provide prompt and authoritative information about the issues and impact of the strike.

The strike was most effective in reducing class attendance in the College of Letters and Science and the School of Education, most of whose instruction was centered on and around Bascom Hill where the picketing was heaviest. Although the University did not collect figures on attendance, the Space Management Office conducted surveys on the use of assigned classrooms. Throughout Tuesday, March 17, 157 of 406 assigned classrooms were in use in Van Hise Hall (where most of the foreign language classes were taught), 63 of 157 in Bascom Hall (English and the social studies), 73 of 182 in the Humanities Building (primarily history, speech, music, and art), and 52 of 78 in chemistry. The numbers were slightly higher but similar the next day. Because the Teamsters Union initially honored TAA picket lines, the strikers also blocked food service deliveries to the dormitories and the Memorial Union, liquid nitrogen service to chemistry labs, and halted the campus bus service. There was little disruption of classes in the Colleges of Agriculture and Engineering, where the TAA had limited support.

Aware that it would be difficult to sustain a protracted strike, on March 18 the TAA sought the involvement of Professor Nathan P. Feinsinger, director of the Law School’s mediation center. Feinsinger readily agreed, delighted to participate in such an historic dispute. He began informal discussions with the two sides—informal, because the University administration had broken off bargaining at the start of what it regarded as an illegal strike. The University also sought a court injunction against the strike, arguing that it was irreparably harming the ability of students to get the education they had contracted for. Student support of the strike varied considerably, with many students honoring and even participating in TAA picket lines. It was difficult to measure the true impact of the strike, however, because some students

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123 Craig, “Graduate Student Unionism,” p. 162.
124 “We were always looking around for fresh case studies,” Feinsinger explained later. “This was ideal.” Feinsinger, oral history interview, 1976-77, UA, quoted in Craig, “Graduate Student Unionism,” p. 163. The chancellor was not overjoyed at this development. “I see no reason for another form of interaction,” commented Chancellor Young. “We’re not bargaining with the TAA, but we will listen to Mr. Feinsinger.” Daily Cardinal, March 20, 21, 1970.
marched on picket lines while also attending their classes and some strikers (and sympathetic faculty members) arranged to continue teaching their classes off campus.

For the most part the strike was orderly and non-violent, a development applauded as "a rare treat" by the conservative Badger Herald.126 Not all strike supporters were committed to peaceful action, however. Someone purporting to represent the New Year's Gang threatened to begin bombing campus buildings if the University did not accept the TAA demands within a week. The Mother Jones Revolutionary League added its militance to picket lines, concentrating especially on the Mathematics Research Center. Some strikers welcomed this SDS support; other more moderate picketers left when the hard-core leftists joined the lines and sought to expand the protest beyond the union demands.127 As the strike wore on, tempers and tactics escalated. On March 24 TAA President Robert Muehlenkamp and three others were arrested for blocking delivery to Gordon Commons, the kitchen and dining facility for the southeast dormitories complex. Later in the day another striker was arrested for blocking deliveries at the Social Science Building.128

The increased militancy may have been intended to show the strikers' resolve as the campus prepared for the ten-day spring recess beginning March 27. The TAA announced its intention to continue picketing delivery areas during the break and set a general membership meeting for Sunday night, April 5, just before the resumption of classes. But by this time pressures were mounting on the strikers to reach a settlement. Teamsters Local 695, which had previously honored TAA picket lines, reluctantly allowed the campus buses to resume operation. "The drivers have a limit as to how much they can stand," explained Donald Eaton, the secretary-treasurer of the union.129 The University revealed that 318 striking teaching assistants would receive reduced pay checks on April 1, with another 167 adjustments possible after further review.130 On April 3 Circuit Judge William Sachjen handed down his ruling on the attorney general's petition for an injunction against the

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126 Badger Herald, March 20, 1970.
130 Ibid., April 1, 1970. Most of the assistants whose pay was docked taught in the College of Letters and Science (302 out of nearly 1,400 total TAs).
strike, declaring it illegal and ordering the striking assistants back to work.

With the resumption of face-to-face bargaining during the break, it was quickly evident the TAA’s educational planning demand was the most significant barrier to a settlement. For many teaching assistants this was an important ideological objective, essential for reforming education at the University; indeed, some were supporting the strike largely or only for this reason. TAA leaders recognized the issue was also critical in holding the allegiance of the union’s undergraduate supporters. For a large majority of the faculty, on the other hand, retaining control over course content and instruction had become a bottom line matter. “They could close this university down until September and we still wouldn’t give an inch,” declared chemistry Professor Alex Kotch, a member of the University bargaining team.\textsuperscript{131} The 1969 Structure Agreement, which laid down the scope and framework of collective bargaining with the TAA, had agreed there should be mechanisms in each department enabling a teaching assistant “to participate in a meaningful way in the educational planning for courses in which he shares a responsibility,” and that these mechanisms were “a proper subject for collective bargaining.”\textsuperscript{132} University bargainers had come to believe, however, this contentious issue could more productively be dealt with outside of contractual language; consequently, their latest proposal omitted any mention of educational planning.\textsuperscript{133}

TAA members voted at their April 5 meeting to reject the latest University offer and continue their strike, defying the injunction—“this unethical and repressive judgment of the courts.”\textsuperscript{134} The impasse was essentially decided at two mass faculty meetings on April 6-7. After heated and protracted debate, rather than endorse bargaining on educational planning and stipulate how students and teaching assistants were to be involved, the faculty adopted the following resolution:

\textsuperscript{131}Milwaukee Journal, March 26, 1970; Capital Times, March 26, 27, 1970.
\textsuperscript{132}University of Wisconsin-Madison and Teaching Assistants Association, Structure Agreement, “Procedure for Obtaining Recognition and Structure for Collective Bargaining,” April 26, 1969, Section 8, UA.
\textsuperscript{133}Capital Times, March 27, 1970.
\textsuperscript{134}Daily Cardinal, April 7, 1970; Craig, “Graduate Student Unionism,” p. 181. Before the strike ended the University provided the names of 29 striking TAs to the attorney general for defying Judge Sachtjen’s injunction. Sachtjen found 21 in contempt on April 23, and sentenced each to a fine of $250 or thirty days in jail. The sentence was appealed over the next several years but eventually the fines were paid in 1973.
It is in the interest of the University community to insure that there are mechanisms in each Department that give students and Teaching Assistants an opportunity to participate in a meaningful way in educational planning. Such department mechanisms shall be developed by each department on the Madison campus in collaboration with the students and Teaching Assistants involved in the courses offered by that Department. Such mechanisms, however, shall not infringe on the ultimate responsibility of the faculty for curriculum and course content.\textsuperscript{135}

The first two sentences, acknowledging the language of the Structure Agreement that had provided the framework for bargaining, were moved by Professor E.R. Mulvihill, the chairman of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, on behalf of the Council of Ten. They were adopted by a vote of 531-140. The final and rather contradictory sentence emphasizing faculty rights was offered as an amendment from the floor by history Professor Theodore S. Hamerow, a hardline faculty rights proponent. It also carried, 530-256. On this student power issue there was obviously little give from a substantial part of the faculty.

With support for the strike waning, the next day the TAA membership turned down a motion to escalate the strike and instead voted 534-348 to accept the University’s April 7 contract offer. TAA President Muehlenkamp lauded the results of the struggle:

This strike has built a union. Members who thought they would never strike, who thought they would never last a week, who thought they couldn’t stay out after Easter, now find they can do a lot more. They know we need to do more. This union will be back next year—and the struggle will be different.\textsuperscript{136}

The strike, he said, had taught students and teaching assistants who their real enemy was:

We’re talking about individual faculty members. . . . We have a few protections and mechanisms and we’re going to run every goddam complaint through the grievance procedure. We’re going to bust the asses of those professors and going to go through the courts.

\textsuperscript{135}UW Faculty Minutes, April 7, 1970.
\textsuperscript{136}Wisconsin State Journal, April 10, 1970.
TAA Vice President Henry Haslach told the membership their task was now to form an alliance with the campus blue collar workers, including research assistants, specialists, and secretaries. “I don’t know about you people,” he said, “but I’m going to use my energy to organize against this motherf---king University for next time.”\(^{137}\) Regardless of the rhetoric, the TAA had won a great deal: union recognition and exclusive representation, bargaining rights, and a contract providing UW-Madison teaching assistants with greater job security and a more carefully delineated grievance procedure. Time would tell whether the gains came at the cost of a more formal and confrontational relationship with their academic departments and teachers.

Like the TAA leadership, the \textit{Daily Cardinal} was also uncertain who had won what it described as “the first annual TA strike,” since “the contract was so pitiful it is hard to find words to describe it.” But the editors thought the student movement had achieved much. “One thing is certain, if winning is defined as the dynamic of learning which we will in turn apply to the next struggle we face, then we have gained from this strike.”\(^{138}\) Chancellor Young pointed out that the TAA had gained nothing that had not been offered by the University before the strike. With the benefit of hindsight and minimizing his own role in the outcome, he later complained that the strikers had really been beaten but were bailed out by some of the faculty and University bargainers who belonged to the “Nate Feinsinger settle at-any-cost school.”\(^{139}\)

After protracted debate, an unhappy Board of Regents approved the contract on April 10 by an 8-2 vote, first rejecting as untimely an amendment declaring that any TAA strike in the future would bring automatic withdrawal of recognition and an end to collective bargaining with the union.\(^{140}\) The legislature’s powerful Joint Committee on Finance voted 12-1 to ask state Attorney General Robert W. Warren to rule on the legality of the TAA contract and by a narrower 7-6 margin urged the regents to rescind it. A number of unhappy legislators argued that the University had no authority to make some of the commitments


\(^{138}\)Ibid., April 10, 1970. In another editorial the paper blamed the faculty for taking “the onus of crushing the strike away from the chancellor’s office. . . . They are old men possessing and trying to preserve a dying institution. They can and do play their great games oblivious to our needs. They cannot do this for long. They are the past and will be overrun.” Ibid., April 7, 1970.

\(^{139}\)Quoted in Craig, “Graduate Student Unionism,” p. 185.

\(^{140}\)UW BOR Minutes, April 10, 1970. The discussion lasted more than two hours and occupied an unprecedented nineteen single-spaced pages of the minutes.
embodied in the contract, and blamed the strike and what they regarded as a give-away settlement on the general permissiveness of the Harrington administration. The critics were neither mollified nor reassured when Warren eventually ruled the contract legal.\textsuperscript{141} Behind the considerable misgivings of many regents, legislators, and faculty members was the realization the University had embarked on a new and uncharted path in dealing with its graduate students, one bound to have an effect on instruction at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Some faculty, in fact, were bitter the administration had agreed to recognize and enter into a collective bargaining contract with the TAA without formal involvement and approval by the faculty governance structure, except on the limited issue of educational planning. Only the high regard generally felt for Chancellor Young kept this criticism from open expression.\textsuperscript{142}

\textit{Climaxing a Tumultuous Semester}

Like many campuses around the country, UW-Madison was a tinderbox of student rebellion in the spring of 1970. The seemingly endless war in Southeast Asia remained the primary corrosive influence, even though the Nixon administration had lowered draft calls and begun troop withdrawals from Vietnam. Selective service was now on a lottery basis, moreover, so that student deferments were a thing of the past and no longer occasioned feelings of guilt. Still, by 1970 many students in

\textsuperscript{141}Craig, "Graduate Student Unionism," pp. 189-90, 194-95. In response to the Joint Finance query whether the contract could bind future Boards of Regents, Warren ruled that the contract was valid and binding only for its duration; future boards were free not to continue recognition of the TAA and not to enter into another agreement. Similarly, while the legislature could not impair the present legally binding contract, it was free to direct what the Board of Regents might do in the future.

\textsuperscript{142}Chancellor Young argued that the faculty did not approve the collective bargaining contracts with other UW unionized employees and in any event had been represented informally by the Committee of Thirty Council of Ten, and by several faculty members on the bargaining team. His critics responded that the comparison with the University's blue collar unions was fallacious. Teaching assistants were much more closely and directly involved with the faculty's primary responsibility for the University's instructional program, both as junior teaching staff and as graduate students; hence the faculty as a body ought to have a major role in developing and approving any new institutional arrangements involving them. Young's faculty critics believed his labor mediation background had led him to minimize the likely problems of working with a hybrid union of immature and transient graduate students who had no long term stake in either their jobs or the institution.
Madison and elsewhere no longer trusted their national government and institutions, or by extension authority at any level of society. Far from the traditional student tendency to view the future with hope and optimism, the mood of the boomer generation had grown deeply pessimistic that necessary reform could be achieved without fundamental change, perhaps even revolution. Youthful idealism had been replaced by dark suspicion and despair.

The 24-day TAA strike, coupled with the earlier firebombings and the destructive anti-GE protest, suggested that the alienation might produce the most disruptive semester yet. More trouble was to come. Shortly after the end of the strike the Daily Cardinal staff elected the paper’s top management for the coming year. Named as editor-in-chief was Rena Steinzor, who had allied herself with Jim Rowen during the year to turn the paper into a leftist collective operating by consensus and ending the role of the Cardinal Board in appointing the editors. Something of a mother hen to the staff, Steinzor was alternately aggressive and profane yet solicitous of her colleagues’ well-being and safety, regularly reminding the paper’s reporters to carry gas masks to campus demonstrations. Steinzor was a hard-core radical, proud that her grandfather was a Russian-born New York garment-cutter and union activist, and a card-carrying member of the Communist Party. In her opening editorial she predicted: “That revolution we are always talking about is, in many ways, starting for us right here.”143 On April 17 the Cardinal urged its readers “To the Streets” in what the organizers predicted might be the biggest anti-war march yet. During the rally at the capitol a so-called Revolutionary Contingent of several hundred radicals went on an hour-long rampage around the square and down State Street, smashing $100,000 worth of plate glass store-front windows before being dispersed by police with clubs and tear gas who tore down the demonstrators’ street barricades in the Mifflin-Bassett area.144 The Cardinal applauded some though not all of the trashers’ actions and targets, but cautioned: “The moment must be chosen carefully. This Saturday was not the moment.” In a separate signed editorial Steinzor distanced herself slightly from her colleagues and supported the trashing, which she attributed to the Mother Jones faction

143 Daily Cardinal, April 14, 1970.
144 Ibid., April 21, 1970. One of the Cardinal reporters covering the rally was its SDS expert, Leo F. Burt, later recruited for the New Year’s Gang as a participant in the August, 1970, MRC bombing.
of SDS as "not an expression of youthful frustration but a highly political reaction to a growing crisis."\textsuperscript{145}

On April 30 President Nixon dispatched U.S. forces into Cambodia to destroy the supply routes used by the North Vietnamese for their forces in the south. UW students had just voted overwhelmingly (3,327 to 890) in a campus referendum calling for an immediate American withdrawal from Vietnam.\textsuperscript{146} Campus protests, some of them violent, immediately erupted all over the United States against this expansion of the war. In an editorial headed "Time of Reckoning" the \textit{Daily Cardinal} warned ominously:

Nixon had better begin arming for a new kind of war in this country, civil war. He has lied, he has cheated, he has escalated. And the time of reckoning is about here.\textsuperscript{147}

In Ohio, Governor Rhodes sent the national guard onto the campus of Kent State University to keep order. In a tragic standoff against taunting student demonstrators, the troopers lost control and fired, killing four protesters and wounding eleven others. UW activists mobilized the campus to join in a nationwide strike against the Cambodian incursion and the bloody repression at Kent State. In a front-page editorial headed "Survival," the \textit{Cardinal} declared:

How many more deaths will occur in this country over the next few days is an open question. The stakes are very high now in the United States of America. . . . Each of us is involved not only in the human machines of war, such as the draft, but in an institution which is essential to waging such wars. We must strike and strike hard—into the community and on our campus to turn the tide now raging so viciously against us.\textsuperscript{148}

The resulting protest strike involved thousands of UW students and quickly erupted into sporadic but continuing violence over the next

\textsuperscript{145}Ibid., April 21, 22, 1970. One reader responded: "The next time you want to throw some rocks, why don’t you stand in a circle and throw them at each other You’ll be doing everyone working for peace a big favor" Another wrote: "As for Saturday’s ‘revolutionary contingent,’ I can’t think of any very sound advice on the way to foment or ‘catalyze’ the revolution. But I can tell them that the Mickey Mouse crap they engaged in Saturday sure as hell isn’t it.” Ibid., April 22, 1970.

\textsuperscript{146}\textit{Badger Herald}, May 1, 1970.

\textsuperscript{147}\textit{Daily Cardinal}, May 2, 1970.

\textsuperscript{148}Ibid., May 5, 1970.
week or so. On the evening of May 5 rioting demonstrators began firebombing a number of buildings on and near the campus. The Kroger’s supermarket on University Avenue, set afire in an earlier demonstration although it was the most convenient source of groceries for students and other nearby residents, this time was totally destroyed by the flames. Roving “affinity groups” even tossed firebombs into the homes of six faculty members, including UW emeritus President E.B. Fred (apparently believing it to be President Harrington’s residence) and Colonel Joseph T. Meserow, professor of aerospace and head of the UW Air Force ROTC program. Fortunately, none caused serious damage. Warning that the University was “in danger,” a shaken Chancellor Young declared a state of emergency and joined Madison Mayor William Dyke in requesting Governor Knowles once again to send the national guard to assist the hard-pressed UW and city police in maintaining order. Asked at a press conference if the University might close, Young responded wearily: “I hope not. It is my intention to continue the operation of the campus and to make it possible for students to attend class.”  

As the rioting continued, the chancellor designated Monday, May 11, as a Day of Concern and urged departments to hold open hearings with faculty and students for “an examination of the critical issues facing the nation.” At the regular meeting of the Board of Regents on May 8 President Harrington, as always controlled and urbane, announced his resignation effective October 1. The president had contemplated this move for several months, recognizing that his support from regents, legislators, and the public was crumbling. He had in fact worked out the terms of his departure with key regents in advance of the meeting. Under the circumstances, however, it appeared Harrington had been forced out by the rioters, as in a larger sense he had.  

The Daily Cardinal termed Harrington’s departure “predictable,” and applauded the widespread firebombing:

All over the nation, hundreds of thousands of students are bringing that fire on home. For it long ago became obvious that the power elite which runs this country just was not going to listen to peaceful marches and refused unilaterally to stop not only their genocidal actions on the Southeast

149Ibid., May 5, 6, 8, 1970.
150Ibid., May 12, 1970.
151UW BOR Minutes, May 8, 1970.
Asian people but their police state tactics on dissenters at home. ... The police and the Guard are a wedge between the powers that run the capitalist system and the people. The Guard, for example, is composed to a large extent of men attempting to avoid the draft. We must learn to move around them. Some of our members did exactly that ... when fires broke out in several business establishments notably Krog-er’s.¹⁵²

There were 44 arrests by the second night of rioting and for a time the campus area seemed to be approaching anarchy. Editor Steinzor preferred to call it “a highly disciplined fight against institutions and ideologies which are repulsive and fatal to the way of life we want to lead.”¹⁵³ Although sorely tempted, the Board of Regents took no action to censor or suppress the Cardinal, but several regents declared themselves “appalled” at its calculated efforts to whip up student violence. Regent Bernard Ziegler, chairman of the board’s Study Committee on Student Newspapers, described the paper as “not much more than a revolutionary instruction sheet.”¹⁵⁴

Although the great majority of students continued to attend their classes, on the eastern part of the campus around Bascom Hill normal academic life was difficult to impossible to maintain amid roving bands of protesters, accompanying police and guardsmen, intermittent sirens, and occasional clouds of tear gas. By the end of several days of rioting the first-floor windows of most University buildings and along State Street had been smashed and were boarded up. In an effort to control high school students and others drawn to the disorders, Chancellor Young ordered University buildings locked at 5:00 p.m. and the campus closed to all persons without valid UW identification. Faculty in a number of departments decided to suspend classes or devote them to a discussion of the war and thus in effect to support the student strikers by winding up the semester early. There was such variation in the announced plans of individual faculty members that the campus administration instructed the separate schools and colleges to decide how to grade students on their academic work during this tumultuous and truncated semester. The largest undergraduate college, Letters and Science, gave students three options: regular final exams and letter grades, taking an incomplete and making up the missing work subse-

¹⁵⁴UW BOR Minutes, May 8, 1970. See also ibid., June 12, 1970.
quently, or accepting a pass-fail grade based on their work to date. The Law School allowed its students to put off final examinations but not avoid them. The School of Business offered both regular final and pass-fail exams. In Agriculture and Engineering, where there was considerably less protest activity, most students took the regular final examinations.\footnote{Ibid., June 12, 1970. Chancellor Young told the Board of Regents he was docking the pay of some twenty faculty members who had canceled their classes during the strike—certainly a low estimate of the number of faculty supporters of the strike. It was nearly impossible, however, to determine whether a class was canceled for lack of students, inability to meet under the riotous conditions, or in support of the protest. It should not be assumed that because there was less protest activity on the western part of the campus that students in engineering and agriculture supported the war; opposition to the war was general across the student body.}

The University faculty held two emergency special meetings during what came to be called the Cambodia-Kent State riots. The first, on May 8, was a mass committee-of-the-whole discussion called by the University Committee at the Stock Pavilion and attended by an estimated 1,200 faculty and 1,000 students. Conceived mostly as an opportunity to let off steam, during more than three hours of emotional debate the meeting adopted six non-binding resolutions. Upon reflection, most of the participants—faculty and students alike—agreed it was not the faculty’s finest hour. Afterward Chancellor Young told reporters he would consider but not be bound by the faculty’s advice. Three weeks later on May 26, at the end of the turbulent semester, the faculty held another special meeting in the Union Theater. This time 630 faculty members gathered to review the recent troubles. After voting down a motion to adjourn and a number of resolutions and amendments, the group adopted the following carefully balanced statement:

\footnote{The resolutions were adopted by ever-dwindling numbers and the vote tallies indicated many abstentions. The first, adopted by the widest margin (600-72) but obviously with many abstentions, declared that “the U.S. should immediately cease all military operations in S.E. Asia.” Another resolution (adopted 329-232) called for the campus to be closed until May 16 “because of our outrage over the widening war in Asia and the recent events at Kent State University,” with another faculty meeting set for the afternoon of May 15 to assess the situation. Another (adopted 430-207) called for a two-week free period just prior to the coming November elections to enable students to take part in political activity and attend University workshops on political issues. Still another (voted 197-170) called on the University administration “to make an effective public demonstration of concern and moral leadership, by joining in representative fashion” a mass march from Bascom Hall to the state capitol on May 11. UW Faculty Minutes, May 8, 1970.}
We deplore and condemn all acts of personal injury, destruction and obstruction that have taken place on or near the campus, in recent days and in recent months and years. There have also been use of invective and personal attack, and some coercion and intimidation. We deplore and condemn these practices. They are hostile to the central idea of a free university, which finds civility and mutual respect to be useful aids toward advancing truth and improving policy.

To attain greater understanding and support for these principles, a committee shall be established on Civil Peace in the University community. The committee shall consist of faculty and student members to be appointed by the Chancellor. The committee shall study conditions on the campus which promote or encourage disruption of civil peace and make recommendations to appropriate agencies of the student body, the faculty or the administration.\textsuperscript{157}

The statement and proposed committee were harmless, but whether they could restore peace to a shattered campus community was an open question.

A somber commencement ceremony went off as scheduled at the stadium on Monday, June 8, with extra police on hand to guard against further violence. Anti-war placards were much in evidence, and many members of the senior class declined to wear the traditional cap and gown as a mark of their protest against the war and the University's continuation of business as usual. Class President David S. Zucker told the assemblage the seniors were donating the rental fees for their spurned academic attire and making other contributions to a fund to help elect peace candidates in the fall elections:

We as seniors should not be wearing academic costumes while the Vietnamese people and their land is [sic] being destroyed in a senseless war of genocide. We should not be wearing costumes while our government is systematically slaying Black Panthers and repressing all black people. We cannot wear costumes while our fellow students are murdered by National Guardsmen. And we cannot wear their costumes while the war and the military devour huge sums that could be put toward giving every American citizen the decent standard of living to which we are all entitled as human beings.\textsuperscript{158}

\textsuperscript{157}Ibid., May 26, 1970.


Tear gas on Bascom Hill. UA, X25-3413.

Sterling Hall after the bombing, August, 1970. photo by Gary Schulz. UA, 4332-J-1.
Former Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall, a prominent environmentalist and the chief commencement speaker, hailed the graduates as the "conscience of the country." Remembering their smashed windows and firebombed homes, not all of faculty members present shared Udall's enthusiasm.

The Bomb

As an uneasy peace returned to the troubled campus, student militants reviewed the recent rioting and planned their next action to "bring the war home." They were convinced that rallies and peace marches were useful only in mobilizing mass support. Only by escalating the violence at home could they get the politicians in Washington to see that their evil war in Vietnam was too costly and divisive to continue. Although only a small minority of the student body, and some of them not even active students, the extremists now openly advocated civil war. The underground newspaper Kaleidoscope, which was hawked around the campus and circulated among Madison radicals, printed directions on how to make and use bombs safely.

Remember, dynamite is easier to get in Wisconsin than firecrackers. We must make the transition from trashing and mass street actions at lengthy intervals to systematic sabotage by innumerable groups if we wish to grow, if we wish to really put muscle behind our slogans and ideas.  

In an article headed "Get a Gun and Learn to Use It!" the paper lamented that the campus buildings housing such offensive programs as ROTC, MRC, and computer science, were still standing.

They may be occupied now, but they won't be for long... Now that things have died down around the campus, time bombs that explode hours after the buildings are empty is the best mechanism. Fire bombs are cool, too—but be in groups of two or three. Molotov cocktails anyone?  

Karleton Armstrong, the New Year's bomber now back in Madison, shared this militancy. Likewise did Leo Burt, the Daily

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161 Ibid., May 19, 1970.
Cardinal’s SDS expert, whose radicalism had been further steeled by beatings received from the Madison police while he covered the recent campus riots. He discovered that his Cardinal press badge made him even more of a target for police attention. Burt had by this time learned that Armstrong was the New Year’s bomber, and readily accepted his invitation to join an attempt to eradicate the hated Army Math Research Center once and for all time. Burt brought another recruit—David Fine, a young Cardinal reporter whose role model at the paper was the fiery activist Jim Rowen. Armstrong was skeptical of Fine’s youth and apparent inmaturity, but recognized that the undertaking he contemplated would require group action. The New Year’s Gang now numbered four: Karl Armstrong and his brother Dwight, plus the new recruits, Leo Burt and David Fine.¹⁶²

The Math Research Center was located on the second, third, and fourth floors of Sterling Hall, which also housed the offices and laboratories of the physics and astronomy departments as well as some classrooms. The conspirators eventually concluded it would be impossible to destroy the center from within because access to it was restricted. They would have to attack the building in which it was located. They first considered planting a bomb in the steam tunnel beneath the building, but concluded it would be difficult to plant enough explosive in such a restricted space. Armstrong decided they would again have to use a mixture of ammonium nitrate fertilizer and fuel oil, the only explosive he could afford on the $200 profit he had gained from the bulk sale of some marijuana. His ill-fated air attack on the BOW plant on New Year’s Eve had taught him that an ANFO bomb must be ignited by an explosion. Because he and the others wanted to avoid casualties, they set their attack for late August when campus activity was at a low ebb. After reconnoitering the site for several nights, they decided the best time would be on a weekend, specifically between 2:00 and 4:00 a.m. on a Monday morning, when the building appeared to be deserted. Without knowing how much explosive power was needed to accomplish their objective, they made a huge bomb of 1,750 pounds of ammonium nitrate and 20 gallons of fuel oil, which Karl calculated would equal 3,400 sticks of dynamite. They packed the ANFO mixture into a number of barrels placed in a white Econoline van stolen randomly from computer science Professor Larry Travis, who had made the mistake of leaving his keys in his van while dropping some

papers off at his office. Karl armed the ANFO barrels with sticks of dynamite and a ten-foot fuse, which he figured would give them about six-and-a-half minutes lead time.

Shortly after 3:30 a.m. on August 24 they parked the Travis van in the driveway next to Sterling Hall directly under the MRC, signaled the waiting David Fine in a nearby public booth to telephone a warning to the Madison police dispatcher, and sped away in the Armstrong family Corvair, borrowed for the weekend from the brothers’ unknowing mother. They were only a few blocks away when the shock wave from the explosion seemed to lift their car off the ground. Looking back at a fireball mushrooming hundreds of feet in the air, an amazed Dwight Armstrong likened it to an atom bomb. His brother Karl later recalled that all he could muster was the shocked one-word comment, “Fuck.”

Armstrong’s bomb did massive damage to Sterling Hall and nearby buildings, including the cardiac wing of University Hospital across the street where miraculously no one was hurt. Instantly killed in Sterling Hall was Robert Fassnacht, a young physics postdoctoral fellow who was working through the night on his superconductivity experiment; several others in the building were seriously injured. Ironically, the target of the bombers, the Mathematics Research Center, had no laboratories and little equipment and was scarcely affected by the destruction around it. The hated center was quickly back in business in new quarters in the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation building on the western edge of the campus. For MRC’s Sterling Hall neighbors, physics and astronomy, it was a far different story. Both departments’ space and equipment were heavily damaged, with several graduate students losing part or all of their thesis research when their professors’ laboratories disintegrated. After pondering the destruction of their labs and the loss of decades of research data, two senior physics faculty, Henry Barschall and Joseph Dillinger—the latter with whom Fassnacht was working—eventually concluded they were too old to rebuild an active research program anew. For them Armstrong’s bomb was intensely personal.

The bombing had a chilling and polarizing effect on the campus community. Most student demonstrators had not expected their protest activity to lead to murder and massive destruction. Hard-core radicals no doubt agreed with Kaleidoscope’s assessment that the bombing was

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163Ibid., pp. 278-308.
inevitable, "the logical outcome of Dow '67, of departmental and dorm organizing in '68 and a strike by the TAA in '69. It is the result of confronting the University with its pig capitalist nature for four years."165 Rena Steinzor and her colleagues at the Daily Cardinal had more trouble explaining the event, especially because two of the suspected bombers were soon identified as Cardinal staffers. The paper declined to judge them, however: "We are with Leo and David now because they are people we care for very deeply and know very well." Students must decide for themselves how to make the most of this traumatic act:

The AMRC was a physical and symbolic installation whose sole purpose was to serve the strong arm of American economic interests across the globe. This military arm of our government has been the most violent instrument in the history of the world and has stolen from murdered and destroyed the lives of people in the countries from Cuba to Vietnam, as well as those at the bottom of the social ladder within its own turf. . . . In order for its physical and symbolic destruction to have any meaning beyond this specific point in time, the movement from which the bombing sprang must be expanded.166

Most UW faculty members were considerably less ambivalent about the meaning of this assault against their campus. Although the bombing had occurred during the late summer vacation period when many UW staff members were away from Madison, within a few days more than a thousand faculty members signed a hastily drafted statement denouncing violence and intimidation and pledging to defend their University.167 Chancellor Young cautioned the Board of Regents against panic or any vindictive reaction:

We believe it is possible to deal with advocates of violence, to punish those who put their theories to practice and break the law, to stand firm against attempts to disrupt and destroy—and at the same time, proceed with enlightened and responsible programs for change. . . .

In its crisis, the University needs to be able to rely on courageous support from its alumni, its friends and, above

165Kaleidoscope, August 30, 1970.
166"Where Do We Go from Here?" Daily Cardinal, registration issue, September, 1970.
all from the members of its own community. Only with such support can it stand solidly against terrorism and move with imagination to new standards of greatness. If it gets such support—and I am confident it will—there is no way the forces of intimidation can prevail.  

168

The End of Violent Revolution

In the days and months ahead it became increasingly evident that the New Year’s Gang had killed not only Bob Fassnacht but the strategy of revolutionary violence as well, in Madison and to a considerable extent in the nation as a whole. The gaping hole in Sterling Hall was a continuing reminder of the enormous explosion that shocked the campus community as had few events in the University’s long history. Student radicals could and did point out that the bombing had merely brought the war home, that it was but an example of what the United States was daily inflicting on the Vietnamese people, and that, as a Cardinal columnist noted, “if Fassnacht had been drafted and killed in Vietnam none of us would stir.” 169 True enough, but to the anti-war but peace-loving idealists who comprised the great bulk of the UW student body, Armstrong’s bomb also brought home the horrors of violence, whether in Vietnam or Madison.

Following the MRC bombing it proved more difficult to attract the sizable protest crowds necessary to provide cover for those bent on trashing, harder to recruit the small affinity groups willing to undertake such violence. There were, in fact, fewer calls now for violent revolution and fewer listeners taking them seriously. Washington’s gradual reduction in draft calls, moreover, and even more the decision in the fall of 1969 to reduce the selective service jeopardy period to a one-year lottery had also lessened the importance of this issue in fueling anti-war protests. Though the American role in the Vietnamese civil war continued on an ever-diminishing basis for nearly three more years, in January, 1973, the Nixon administration finally concluded its peace negotiations in Paris with the North Vietnamese government, accepting terms that probably could have been agreed upon years earlier. The resulting American withdrawal was quickly followed by the collapse of the South Vietnamese government and the occupation of the entire

country by Hanoi's forces. With peace came the end of the longest and most unpopular war in the nation's history, a military defeat that had traumatized a generation, cost more than 58,000 American lives and $150 billion, and seriously damaged the morale and effectiveness of the United States military forces. Because of it, neither the nation nor the University of Wisconsin would ever be the same again.