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NEWS

california federation
of teachers

RELEASE IMMEDIATELY
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The President of the teacher union movement in California today issued the following statement on the situation at the University of California in Berkeley.

I. BACKGROUND:

At noon on Thursday, December 1, the membership of AFT Local 1570 voted to strike against their employer, the University of California. The members of the local, who are graduate students employed as teaching and research assistants at UC, have been working for the past three months to gain the basic tenets of academic freedom from the University's administration. These attempts have been largely unsuccessful and were dealt a major setback on Wednesday, November 30.

On that date the University used off-campus police to arrest students sitting in around a US Navy recruiting table on campus. The students maintain that existing rules do not allow non-student organizations the right to set up a table on campus; therefore, the University has no right to make an exception of the US Navy without making exceptions for other non-commercial off-campus organizations or groups.

The Associated Students of the University of California (ASUC) advised the administration in advance that it should not allow a recruiting table to be set up in the ASUC Student Union Building. The ASUC warned the administration that trouble would surely follow. The administration did not chose to heed the advice of the ASUC.

Robert Atkins, President of AFT Local 1570, stated that it is impossible to teach in an environment where the University calls upon outside police to resolve internal political difficulties. Academic freedom, according to Atkins and the AFT local, is very definitely a working condition and must exist if the education process is to be meaningful.

II. DEMANDS:

AFT Local 1570, University Employed Graduate Students, has made the following demands:

- 1) That the administration discontinue using off-campus law enforcement officers for the resolution of on-campus political disputes;
- 2) That all charges be dropped against those arrested so far, and that no disciplinary action be taken;
- 3) That all non-commercial off-campus organizations and groups (including the US Navy, Peace Corps, etc.) be allowed to set up and man tables in the areas designated for that purpose;
- 4) That all disciplinary hearings involving students be open hearings if the student so desires, and that such hearings be conducted under the basic tenets of legal due process;
- 5) That negotiations begin immediately on the establishment of a rules committee, and that a majority of voting members be students; and
- 6) That the University recognize AFT Local 1570 as the exclusive bargaining agent for the graduate students employed at the Berkeley campus.

III. STATEMENT:

In light of the above facts I have sent a telegram to the President of AFT Local 1570 which says:

"University of California officials should not deny students full academic rights and privileges. The California Federation of Teachers believes that all Americans, including students, are entitled to equal, fair, democratic treatment. Further, like any citizen of this Nation, a student should be guaranteed the right to participate in the democratic processes. We deplore the action of the University administration in using off-campus police for on-campus problems. We support AFT Local 1570 in its efforts to secure democratic rights for university students."

Marshall Axelrod
CFT President

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