

Dartmouth Community Reviews Wallace Riot

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HANOVER "A deplorable incident which fortunately happened."

That's how Dartmouth Professor Larry Smith described the riot which followed Alabama Governor George Wallace's speech at Dartmouth last Wednesday night.

Prof. Smith spoke as a member of a panel which drew about 400 Dartmouth students to the Top of the Hop Tuesday night to discuss the reasons for the riot and the action they felt the college should take in its aftermath.

The range of thinking encompassed during the two-and-a-

half-hour debate extended from the Afro-American Society's claim that the riot they are accused of instigating was spontaneous and reflected the Negro students' lack of faith in their white counterparts' ability to see through Wallace's statements, to the Dartmouth Conservative Society's belief that the riot was shameful, disgusting, boorish, childish, an outrage which caused the nation to look upon Dartmouth as "another Berkeley."

Prof. Smith agreed with the Afro-American group that the majority of the students who attended the Wallace talk did not appreciate what Wallace

stood for and gave the impression of supporting the outspo-

ken segregationist by applauding many of his statements.

He sympathized with the Negro students, said he shared their moral outrage, but called for better protest technique.

Wallace Gained

Prof. Lawrence Radway drew long loud applause when he said Wallace had taken advantage of the Dartmouth community. "He had nothing to lose by coming here," Radway noted, explaining that the riot created much sympathy support for Wallace in other parts of New Hampshire "where Dartmouth is about as popular as Harvard is in eastern Massachusetts."

On the other hand, Radway explained, if Dartmouth had given Wallace a polite reception (as it did in 1963) Wallace could have used that apparent support in arguing that he had "gone up to that sedate New England community and talked with those nice college boys and been understood and supported."

"Wallace came here to use and manipulate this college and I'm sorry we gave him the chance, and hope we won't again," Radway said.

He asked the students to imagine what it is like to be a Negro at an almost all-white New England college at a time when the American Negro faces his most challenging moment in society.

"He wants the respect of his peers back home," Radway said. "He can't see the man who represents everything he fights to overcome gaining support from his fellow students without reacting."

The riot was not a childish rebellion, he said, but contained some of the stuff of high adult politics. He called for deeper study of the Negro cause rather than "pep-talks or discussions of disciplinary action."

Applaud Woody Lee

Afro-American Society President Woody Lee drew a standing ovation from the students when he demanded that the students "crawl out of your apathy and take a look at the world around you."

He said his society would not apologize for its actions which he said many students passed off as "Negro animalism."

"Would you have us go back to shuffling our feet and scratching our heads?" he asked.

He told the white students to wake up, to try to understand Negro emotion, to stop trying to maintain order by continuing to put the Negro down as inferior and said the riot was the responsibility of the entire college community which he said has failed to learn about the Negro situation.

"If you condemn our attitude and fail to understand what we're fighting against," he said, "who will you blame when we step over your dead bodies?"

Prof. Christian Potholm said the Negro has for 200 years "stood at the door of the white society with his hat in his hands asking to be admitted on any basis."

"What you see today is not a Negro revolution but the final personification of the American Revolution. We must recognize the enormous gap between the American dream, with its cornerstone of equality, and the cold, chaotic world that confronts us."

Bill Green, editor of the college newspaper, which invited Wallace here, said he did not regret Wallace's appearance on campus.

"We lead a placid, academic life in Hanover," he said. "We're removed from the real world."

Green said he believed that as a result of the Wallace appearance the students have an improved opportunity "to understand what it means to be left out, to be stepped on."

"Wallace didn't use Dartmouth—we used him. We used him to bring the real world here, and I hope the incident doesn't make us so afraid of future incidents that we invite only ministers of the interior from Canadian provinces," he said.

Colby Junior College psychology instructor Joseph Topping, who led the march into Webster Hall during Wallace's speech, asked the students, "Do you have to be black to be outraged by what Wallace stands for?"

Petition Offered

Later he offered a petition censuring Dartmouth President John Sloane Dickey and the college administrators "who disgraced the college by apologizing to Wallace."

Bill Lind of the Conservative Society objected to what he termed the Negroes' belief that they are morally superior. Wallace's reception here should have been determined by the majority, he said, not by a minority group that would not permit the majority to decide for itself.

"We all have rights," he said. "You can't permit complete disorder in the name of emotional response."

Concerning action the college should take at a disciplinary meeting Wednesday, Dean Charles Dey said he did not believe that the college will be pushed into any action "because of alumni pressure or a desire to preserve the Dartmouth image."

Many letters have been received by the college this week from alumni who threaten to cut off contributions and demand strong disciplinary action against the student instigators and faculty members who participated in the riot.

Asked how they thought the college should handle future appearances of controversial figures, student opinions ranged from one who said, "Don't invite politicians," to one who suggested an academic course in race relations.

Most widely supported was the suggestion of a Negro student who said the college should provide an opportunity for rational dissent. "If you have a controversial person here, put some members of his opposition on the stage with him and let them question him on what he really believes."

Another Negro student asked for college action which would help to unite, not divide black and white relations at Dartmouth.

Wednesday, May 10, 1967

The Dartmouth

Response To Violence

The statement issued yesterday by the UGC-JC and the Committee on Administration is an appropriate response to last Wednesday's incidents. It deserves strong endorsement and speedy response from the entire community.

Point #1 of the statement demands the honest acceptance of two basic principles: that men are responsible for their actions and that violence in response to an unpopular man or idea is inappropriate in an academic community. Instead of forcing these ideas on the community, the statement provides a mechanism whereby voluntary acceptance of them may be tangibly demonstrated.

Point #2 states clearly that in one way or another, the entire community is at least covertly responsible for creating or contributing to the conditions that allowed last Wednesday's violence to occur. Nearly 400 persons expressed this exact sentiment at the Top of the Hop Tuesday night.

Point #3 admits at last that Dartmouth students have received a less than adequate social and political education. And what is more important, the statement announces the intention to do something about it.

It was apparent last night that several student groups misunderstand the statement's tone and purpose.

It is impossible to interpret this statement as a punishment. It neither condemns, criticizes nor moralizes and the notion of blame is noticeably absent. Moreover, it is difficult to see how the proposed conditional suspension could possibly harm a student. Conditional suspension does not become part of a student's permanent record, nor does it affect his selective service status.

In addition, it is hard to see how this statement could be construed as a panacea for disgruntled alumni. The alumni letters demanded permanent action against all students involved in the Wallace incident. The statement comes nowhere near compliance with this ridiculous demand. Moreover, its obvious functional benefits and the fact that it was drafted and endorsed by a student-faculty committee preclude the assumption that it is built around alumni considerations.

Properly understood in its totality, the statement expresses the same sentiments we heard from Afro-American Society president Woody Lee Tuesday night "Harambe," he said, "Let's all pull together."

Instead of resorting to ridicule and word games, the entire campus should respond to this statement in the spirit with which it was issued and make sure that Dartmouth uses George Wallace to help it grow.

Valley News

FRIDAY, MAY 12, 1967