

ON WEDNESDAY, May 3, the former Governor of Alabama George Wallace came to Hanover to speak as the guest of The Dartmouth. These excerpts are from the report by Dean Thaddeus Seymour.

INGREDIENTS FOR A RIOT

Kodak-FIGHT Controversy: For ten days before the Wallace visit, campus attention was drawn to the controversy between Kodak and FIGHT (Rochester civil rights organization). Between reporting in The Dartmouth and a sit-in, the campus was unusually astir over the involvement of students in the issue of civil rights. Petitions and counter-petitions added to the tension. A rally on the afternoon of Wallace's visit was planned but subsequently cancelled.

Proposed Demonstrations: On Tuesday, May 2, The Dartmouth carried reports that the Afro-American Society was urging "negative support" and that SDS (Students for a Democratic Society) would try to "press him into answering questions that would show his true side." The Dean's Office stayed in close touch with the strategy of these organizations and was assured that no demonstration was planned. (The Dean is persuaded that the various incidents were the result of individual actions and were not a premeditated or organized demonstration sponsored by a particular group.)

Press and Radio: The presence of flash bulbs, TV cameras, and bright lights added to the tension and heightened excitement in the hall. When Wallace arrived to speak, the atmosphere was highly charged and volatile.

WALLACE'S SPEECH

Security Precautions: The Dean's Office concluded in advance that policemen in the hall would intensify rather than subdue the atmosphere. Instead, Campus Police were at all doors to make their presence known. They confiscated placards, but cloth banners apparently were smuggled in under coats. The staff of The Dartmouth served as ushers inside the hall, and they undertook to maintain order. They helped much more than the national press has recognized and did, in fact, eject some of the hecklers. It was The Dartmouth ushers who intercepted the "rush" on the stage.

There were town and state police on hand (36 is the present estimate) in case of "emergency."

Heckling: There was considerable heckling at the start of the speech, and ushers tried to keep this in hand. No amount of precaution could prevent some heckling, but the Dean was hopeful that most students would respond to the efforts of the Dartmouth Christian Union, which was passing out handbills urging silence. However, as some students applauded Wallace, others jeered

him. Finally, a large group staged a "walk-out" and relative order was restored.

The "Rush": On the steps of Webster, a young faculty member at Colby Junior College rallied a sizeable group of students to rush the platform. They burst past the guards through a closed door and proceeded most of the way up the center aisle before being stopped by The Dartmouth's ushers and other students. They then left the hall.

The remainder of the speech and the question period were relatively uneventful.

WALLACE'S DEPARTURE

WDCR: The Wallace speech was broadcast by WDCR. When the "rush" occurred, a large number of students came from their dormitories out of curiosity, quite excited. By the conclusion of the speech, a large crowd was gathered outside Webster.

Picture-Taking: When he left the platform at the conclusion of the speech, Wallace stopped by his car for pictures. The lights and flash-bulbs attracted the crowd to him and a few demonstrators attempted to block his car. WDCR described this scene, and more students streamed out of dormitories.

Location of Car: Despite prior urging that Wallace leave quickly, his car was tightly curbed-parked between two others. (In addition, the driver had difficulty starting the engine.) The crowd gathered to a critical size, with the fringes pressing in to see what was happening. The car was quickly buried and hopelessly surrounded. Finally, largely through the efforts of College Proctor John O'Connor, the car was able to move. As terrible as the situation was, it should be reported that there were no swinging clubs or drawn guns (as reported by some press), and it was Dartmouth students who finally cleared the way.

TELEGRAM

At 10:55 that evening the Dean sent the following telegram to Governor Wallace: "I SINCERELY APOLOGIZE THAT CERTAIN DARTMOUTH UNDERGRADUATES SO FLAGRANTLY ABUSED THE CARDINAL PRINCIPLE OF AN ACADEMIC COMMUNITY BY INFRINGING ON YOUR RIGHTS AS A GUEST ON OUR CAMPUS. THERE CAN BE NO JUSTIFICATION FOR THEIR ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR. I SPEAK FOR THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY WHEN I ASSURE YOU THAT THIS COLLEGE STANDS ON THE PRINCIPLE THAT A MAN'S OPINIONS, HOWEVER UNPOPULAR OR CONTROVERSIAL, DESERVE A FREE AND UNOBSTRUCTED PLATFORM. AS DEAN OF DARTMOUTH COLLEGE I AM ASHAMED AND I CONVEY MY APOLOGIES TO YOU."

Immediate Statements

The next day President Dickey issued the following statement: "It's an old story. A few silly people got the trouble they apparently wanted and a few irresponsibles demonstrated that they neither know or care about democracy."

Many students and faculty expressed their apology by telegram and letter. The Dean made the following remarks the next day at Wetdown which attempted to give some perspective to the incident and provide a foundation for future action.

"Last night we saw the worst of Dartmouth. Since then I have had some students express their concern that the 'image' of the College has been hurt. Let us not mislead ourselves -- last night was not an 'image'; it was reality. Of course everyone regrets what happened, but it did happen. The curtain was drawn back and for a few hours we had a terrible look at everything which stands contrary to what is represented here -- by these men; by this Old Pine; and by this handsome old silver trophy. Reason gave way to passion; individuality gave way to the horror of a mob; academic freedom was insulted and denied. And I'm not talking about just a few people nor those who represented but one point of view. I am talking about a hall full of Dartmouth people and a mob which abused a guest at this College.

"Let us not be quick to unload our sense of guilt on just a few, for last night was a part of every person here at Dartmouth in 1967. All of us are aware of the new forces rushing so headlong in our society and shaping the character of the contemporary college campus. Last night we saw what can happen here -- not 'image,' but the real thing.

"But what is done is done, and no number of telegrams or letters of apology can remove that fact.

"The test of this place, and of each man here will be our capacity to learn from what has happened; to respond with reason, judgment, and responsibility; to assure that such an offense against academic freedom can never happen again. I pray that last night was an end and not a beginning."

On Thursday evening the Committee on Administration issued the following statement concerning its deliberations:

"The Committee on Administration met for three hours today. It deplores the incidents of last night and affirms its determination that both the principles of freedom of speech and public order must be respected and protected at Dartmouth. It heartily endorses the public statements of apology and regret made by Dean Seymour. The Committee has satisfied itself that the demonstration was not staged by a particular group or organization. It is continuing its investigation in consultation with College and public officials to determine responsibility and appropriate action."

WALLACE TELEGRAM

MR. WALLACE responded to Dean Seymour's telegram with a telegram of his own: "I very much appreciate your telegram of May 3. I want you to know that I realize that only a small number of your students were involved.

This was the vociferous minority and certainly the overwhelming majority of your student body carried on the fine traditions of Dartmouth in their defense of free speech. I am most grateful to the many Dartmouth students who actively assisted us, all to the credit of your fine institution."

CONDITIONAL SUSPENSION

"The Judiciary Committee of the Undergraduate Council and the Faculty Committee on Administration, while recognizing the deep emotional and moral responses which an unpopular individual or idea can arouse, nevertheless jointly affirm and support the principles of free speech, public order, and individual safety in the Dartmouth community.

"Applying these principles to the Wallace incident of May 3:

"1. The Committees have agreed that students who participated overtly in that disturbance will be declared 'not in good standing' and will be suspended conditionally at the end of the term. The students so suspended will be readmitted and returned to good standing upon application. The College will interpret application for readmission as an affirmation of the standards of conduct appropriate to an academic community.

"With confidence that individuals will acknowledge their overt participation in this incident, we call on them to identify themselves by letter to the UGC-JC.

"2. The Committees recognize, however, that responsibility for the conditions which contributed to this disturbance is shared by the entire community. Accordingly, we invite all who feel a shared responsibility to direct letters to the Office of Student Government making known their views about the incident and expressing their willingness to help correct these conditions.

"3. The events of May 3 have demonstrated that the College community as a whole -- students, faculty, and administrators -- must become more concerned with the social problems of our times and the constructive means by which men of conscience can participate in their solution. To help promote this awareness, the Committees will ask the faculty and Student Government to develop programs which will direct community attention to such issues and recognize these programs as a part of the educational responsibility of this institution."