

# Call for Student Power at Wayne State

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1967

The long-denied files of Wayne University students' political and personal activities were discovered last week amid a protest about the lack of student involvement in the decision-making processes of the University.

While 30 student leaders staged an all-night vigil Wednesday, outside the University president's office, James McCormick, vice-president for Student Affairs, and a delegation of five students found the "non-existent" files in the University's department of Safety and Security office.

The files, which reportedly were the personal property of Edward Stogdill of the Investigation department, contained newspaper clippings and pictures from demonstrations, records of arrests and charges of homo sexuality, records of paroles, students' police records and pamphlets and leaflets of campus organizations.

McCormick, President Keast and Security and Safety Director Donald F. Stevens denied knowledge of the files' existence. McCormick, prior to the discovery, had met with the students staging the vigil and assured them that no such files were kept by the University.

McCormick then agreed to prove this by taking a delegation of students to the spot where the files were supposed to be. When he and the students returned to the vigil the students looked jubilant and McCormick seemed to have aged several years.

Part of this aging process might have been caused by the presence of President Keast at the vigil when the vice president returned.

Keast said the files would be destroyed. At that time an agreement was reached that the files would be transferred to Dean of Students Duncan Sells' office and the Student-Faculty Council decide the following evening whether to burn the files or to turn them over to the people concerned.

Keast, however, refused to continue to discuss the students' demands for a voice in the decision making, saying "I have no obligation to expound on these areas to this group at this time.

"You do not officially represent the organizations that you participate in and therefore, you cannot speak for the other students in the organizations."

During the all-night vigil the students drew up a list of six demands to submit to the student body at a rally on Thursday. The demands cited that students should be granted voting privileges on each presidential advisory committee; that a student be allowed to sit on the Board of Governors with a voice until the state constitution can be changed to allow him to vote; and that binding University-wide referendums be instituted.

The demands also include a proposal for an investigatory committee to check and have access to all University files; that administrators such as the Dean of the students be selected by the students; and that students and faculty have the sole decision making power to determine academic policy such as faculty hiring, promotion, tenure, curricula, and the question of a non-graded credit system.

The students suggested to the administration that as an expression of good faith it immediately hold a binding referendum on a pass-no pass system.

Thursday morning the administration announced that it would burn the files without giving students a chance to confirm that they had been destroyed and not allowing the students involved to decide whether they wanted their files destroyed or returned to them.

At the rally on Thursday several hundred students listened to the events of the last 24 hours and then 400 of them stormed the 11<sup>th</sup> floor of Mackenzie Hall administrative offices to protest the complete lack of student voice in University decisions.

At 6 p.m. the executive board of the Student Faculty Council and the Liberal Arts Student Faculty Board and a representative of the protesting students met with President Keast. At that time Keast threw the demands back to the students asking for more specific demands and the mechanism by which to institute them.

Student-Faculty Council chairman Chuck Larson reported back to the group and another vigil and rally was scheduled. At the rally Friday 700 to 1,000 students showed up and set a deadline for Keast to answer the six demands.

Keast had until Thursday, May 11, to “answer the questions we have put forth, then general ones—we can deal with the mechanics later—if he agrees that students should have a voice,” Larson said Friday. The protesting students will meet again and decide on the next action to take.

# fifth Estate

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