

# Major Problems in California History



DOCUMENTS AND ESSAYS

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anything else. . . . It is easy to see that there should be real resentment on the part of the students. But it is resentment whose causes are, as we have seen, very difficult for the student to perceive readily. That is why what occurred last semester gained its initial impetus from the very different involvements of what are mostly middle-class students in the struggles of the Negro people. Thus, it was both the irrationality of society, that denies to Negroes the life of men, and the irrationality of the University, that denies to youth the life of students, which caused last semester's rebellion.

### Ronald Reagan Denounces the Morality Gap at Berkeley, 1966

There has been a leadership gap and a morality and decency gap at the University of California at Berkeley where a small minority of beatniks, radicals and filthy speech advocates have brought such shame to and such a loss of confidence in a great University that applications for enrollment were down 21% in 1967 and are expected to decline even further.

You have read about the report of the Senate Subcommittee on Un-American Activities—its charges that the campus has become a rallying point for Communists and a center of sexual misconduct. Some incidents in this report are so bad, so contrary to our standards of decent human behavior that I cannot recite them to you in detail.

But there is clear evidence of the sort of things that should not be permitted on a university campus.

The report tells us that many of those attending were clearly of high-school age. The hall was entirely dark except for the light from two movie screens. On these screens the nude torsos of men and women were portrayed from time to time in suggestive positions and movements.

Three rock and roll bands played simultaneously. The smell of marijuana was thick throughout the hall. There were signs that some of those present had taken dope. There were indications of other happenings that cannot be mentioned here.

How could this happen on the campus of a great University? It happened because those responsible abdicated their responsibilities.

The dance was only called to a halt when janitors finally cut off the power in the gymnasium forcing those attending to leave.

And this certainly is not the only sign of a leadership gap on the campus.

It began when so-called "free-speech advocates," who in truth have no appreciation of freedom, were allowed to assault and humiliate an officer of the law. This was the moment when the ringleaders should have been taken by the scruff of the neck and thrown off of the campus—permanently.

It continued through the filthy speech movement, through activities of the Vietnam Day Committee and all this has been allowed to go on in the name of academic freedom.

What in Heaven's name does academic freedom have to do with rioting, with anarchy, with attempts to destroy the primary purpose of the University which is to educate our young people?

These charges must neither be swept away under the rug by a timid administration or by public apologists for the University. The public has a right to know from open hearings whether the situation at Berkeley is as the report says.

The citizens who pay the taxes that support the University also have a right to know that, if the situation is as the report says, that those responsible will be fired, that the University will be cleaned up and restored to its position as a major institution of learning and research.

For this reason I today have called on the State Legislature to hold public hearings into the charges of Communism and blatant sexual misbehavior on the campus. I have sent personal wires to Senator Hugh Burns, the President Pro Tem of the Senate and to Assembly Speaker Jesse Unruh urging that they hold joint public hearings.

Only in this way can we get at the facts. Only this way can we find who is responsible for the degradation of a great University.

Only this way can we determine what steps must be taken to restore the University to its position, steps that might go even beyond what I have already suggested.

Yes, there are things that can be done at the University even if a hearing is never held. This administration could make changes. It could demand that the faculty jurisdictions be limited to academic matters.

It could demand that the administrators be told that it is their job to administer the University properly and if they don't we will find someone who will.

The faculty could also be given a code of conduct that would force them to serve as examples of good behavior and decency for the young people in their charge.

When those who advocate an open mind keep it open at both ends with no thought process in the middle, the open mind becomes a hose for any idea that comes along. If scholars are to be recognized as having a right to press their particular value judgments, perhaps the time has come also for institutions of higher learning to assert themselves as positive forces in the battles for men's minds.

This could mean they would insist upon mature, responsible conduct and respect for the individual from their faculty members and might even call on them to be proponents of those ethical and moral standards demanded by the great majority of our society.

These things could be done and should be done. The people not only have a right to know what is going on at their universities, they have a right to expect the best from those responsible for it.