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## The Beacon (05/04/1970)

University of Rhode Island

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Student organizations officially supporting the strike: Student Senate, BEACON, WRIU, Commuters' Association, and Interfraternity Council.

**Donates \$300, Votes to Lower Flags:**

# Senate Supports Strike

by Joan Zompa

A student strike called for Monday and Tuesday in reaction to President Nixon's extension of the war into Cambodia was organized at meetings Sunday at 4:30 and 9:30 p.m.

The emergency meeting at 4 p.m., attended by about 75 persons was called by the

"Student Strike Steering Committee" consisting of Rick Nathan, Beverly Lowell, Joseph Quinn, Spencer Gilband, Liz Graham, Chuck Colarulli, Tony Robinson, Steve Elliot, and Professors Arthur Stein and Elton Rayack.

Strike committee spokesman, Rick Nathan, said

it is important that the strike "stop the university from functioning."

Student Mobilization Committee Chairman, Paul Crowley, encouraged students to strike classes Monday and Tuesday, to picket in front of the academic buildings and talk to those trying to attend classes, and to enter their

classes to explain their reason for walking out and to urge the professor and students to do the same. This attitude was strongly reinforced by Dr. Stein.

Asked what good boycotting classes at isolated URI will do, Rebecca Tippens, answered "We have to start here before we can educate and involve the outside community in our ultimate goal."

Questioned about the need for violent action, Paul Crowley said, "We can't take the responsibility for promoting violence, but if someone else provokes it, we certainly can react." About 40 student marshals were called for at the late meeting, however, to try to prevent any violent outbreaks today.

At the 9:30 meeting held in the Ballroom, about 450 people responded to the call for immediate action by the

committee. Rick Nathan, outlined the schedule for the strike tomorrow and said that there would be a member of the Chicago eight at either the 11 a.m. rally or the 8 p.m. speech and rally.

The crowd of students broke into enthusiastic applause after being told of impeachment proceedings of President Nixon by a Californian congressman on Tuesday and also when the National Student Association announced that 97 schools would go on strike Tuesday in protest.

Bill Obrien, former head of the Exodus committee presented two demands, one that academic amnesty be granted to all students participating in the strike and the other that the student Union be open for the strike as headquarters for the committee for 24 hours if necessary.

## Baum Issues Statement Urging Individual Choice

The following is a statement issued by President Werner Baum to the Student Senate concerning Monday's Student Strike:

"Last week surely must have marked one of the darkest moments in the history of the Presidency of the United States. The horror of the moment was especially striking to me in Rome, many thousands of miles from the scene, in a different atmosphere, and among representatives of nations so diverse as Australia, Ghana, and the Soviet Union.

Let me first comment on Mr. Nixon's indictment of students. He surely knows that the "bum", to use his terminology, is a very small fraction of the American student body. He surely knows that the vast majority is either unfortunately unconcerned or deeply and thoughtfully concerned about a major problem of our times, a problem which touches especially those still young enough to be full of zeal and idealism, those young enough to die grotesquely. The kindest interpretation one can make of Mr. Nixon's comment is that it was the unremediated mistake of a man under enormous pressures and temporarily tired; but presidents, even university presidents, are not supposed to be human beings who get tired and lose control for even an instant. Less kind is the interpretation that, instead of "bringing us together" in accord with his campaign rhetoric, he is seeking to polarize the situation between Students and John Q. Citizen; unfortunately - and we tend to forget this in our campus setting - he is probably astute enough to read the political winds correctly. John Q. Citizen, if forced to choose between student and President at his juncture would almost certainly choose the latter. In view of Mr. Nixon's remarks, one must now seriously wonder whether he has been listening too much to Mr. Agnew, or whether Mr. Agnew has really been speaking for Mr. Nixon all these months.

With respect to the broader question, our invasion of Cambodia, Mr. Nixon's action is a tragedy of the first order. The implications of his move have been discussed by those much more knowledgeable and articulate than I. Let me just quote from a column by Anthony Lewis which appeared in Saturday's Paris edition of the HERALD TRIBUNE: "This is not an invasion of Cambodia", President Nixon said. If the young judge those who run American society by the standard of truth in that statement, should anyone be surprised at cynicism or unbearable frustration on the campuses of the United States?"

There are, however, two further points I must make. One has to do with the presidency of the United States. While we may be seeing one of its darkest moments, the presidency as an institution still remains one of man's brightest hopes for effective governance. This belief, too, is reinforced by spending a week at an international conference. One need only talk with representatives from Greece, Brazil, the Soviet Union, or anyone of many other nations to realize vividly how rare is the nation in which the people can retire a President as unceremoniously as we dealt with Lyndon Johnson.

Finally, I must again emphasize the distinction between my actions and expressions as an individual and as the president of the University of Rhode Island. As an individual I understand your frustration, I share this frustration, and I encourage you to let your conscience be your guide in whether or not you participate in a symbolic boycott of classes. As President I cannot be party to any protest effort to stop the University's normal activities. I cannot be party to infringing on the academic freedom of those who wish to pursue their usual responsibilities whether or not they agree with Mr. Nixon's action. I cannot be party to changing the

University from a battleground of ideas to a headquarters for any particular doctrine. And I certainly cannot force on the institution my own standard of values.

I ask you especially to think about this last point. I have been asked for a statement of my opinion of President Nixon's action. Do you really think my personal opinion should somehow determine an institutional posture? Just think of what this would imply. For example, if I were personally opposed to the use of alcohol, should we have no pub?

If any of you feel you must participate in a symbolic boycott of classes, I cannot honestly say I blame you. But there are probably more effective ways to express your righteous indignation. Through thousands of letters and telegrams from students and their parents to Messrs. Nixon, Pastore, Pell, Tiernan, and St Germain we can get action. I have already sent a copy of this statement to each of these gentlemen. And if you still think public officials are never responsive, note that just last week the Rhode Island Legislature overwhelmingly approved lowering the voting age to eighteen, and the Governor so noted it in a special ceremony last Friday.

Finally, remember that peace will not be won through violence. Violence makes no more sense in the United States than it does in IndoChina." Werner A. Baum, President

## Mass Meetings Called To Organize Strike

by Anne S. Foster

The Student Senate voted last night in emergency session to call a general strike of classes today and tomorrow, May 4 and 5.

In separate resolutions, the Senate also voted to lower flags to half-mast as a sign of mourning until U.S. intervention ceases in Southeast Asia, to make \$300 available to the official Strike Steering Committee, to send a statement of its action to President Nixon and the state Congressional delegation, and to support the impeachment of President Nixon "on the grounds he has violated his Constitutional authority."

The exact wording of the major senate resolution is as follows:

Be it resolved that the Student Senate of the University of Rhode Island call a general strike of classes on Monday and Tuesday, May 4 and 5.

Be it resolved that the Student Senate urge all students, faculty and administration to non-violently strike classes Monday and Tuesday to express opposition

to Nixon's action in Cambodia, the bombing of North Vietnam, the University's ties with the Defense Department, and the jailing of political prisoners.

Be it further resolved that the Student Senate reaffirm the statement of student rights at this juncture with regard to the right of all individuals to attend class.

Be it further resolved that all students act non-violently to counter the violence in Southeast Asia and to preserve academic freedom at URI.

Be it further resolved that the entire University community (faculty, graduates and undergraduates) vote on a referendum to be held Tuesday, May 5, as to the continuance of the strike. This referendum will be worded: 1) I am for continuance of the student strike until Friday, 2) I am for resuming class tomorrow.

An amendment to the main resolution, proposed by Senator Roy Daiell, calling for immediate dismissal of faculty members attempting to intimidate strike participations was defeated.

## Editorial Strike

We support the strike called for by the Student Senate and the Strike Steering Committee. WE DO NOT, NOR WILL WE EVER, SUPPORT VIOLENCE in any form. We cannot oppose violence in South-East Asia and condone it here. Strike in Peace. Strike for Peace Now!

STRIKE to stop this rollercoaster moving towards national chaos and death. There is much to save in this country, and there is a chance we may lose everything at the hands of a president who has flaunted the Constitution and who cares little for the peoples' protest.