CAN THE ARMY BUY A SCIENTIST’S VOTE?

Last Thursday the San Francisco Chapter of the Academic Senate of the University of California (i.e., the Medical Center) voted approximately 60 to 15 against supporting a Day of Concern—a day devoted to analysis of the activities of the scientist and health workers, and a review of his relationship to the "at large" community. This Day of Concern was conceived by a group of scientists at MIT and is being actively supported by other groups of faculty and students on many university campuses.

Why should a group of scientists and health workers such as the members of the U.C. Academic Senate attempt to quash a day of inquiry regarding the role of scientists in the world community?

**Vested Interests.** We have seen how political and economic interest groups have exerted their influence at various levels in the University hierarchy, attempting to prevent educational reform and more directly to achieve economic gain. The direct pressures from the Governor and the State Legislature by way of the Board of Regents, the attempted U.C. budget cuts, and the firing of Clark Kerr are some of the more evident. The pressures exerted by large companies to silence dissent to their activities have been prevalent, only less obvious. Notably the attempts by P.C. & E. to prevent a group of the U.C. faculty from opposing the placement of a nuclear reactor at Bodega Bay in Northern California.

In 1967 the National Science Foundation attempted to force the removal of a Berkeley mathematics professor from a large research project which it funded. It is clear that this action was due to the professor's involvement in anti-war activities. This crude attempt at political suppression was met with indignation and threats of resignation from NSF committees by several eminent scientists.

**And More Vested Interests.** After seeing the response of the academic and scientific community to the attempted squelch of political activity by a government agency we must still explain the U.C. Medical Center Academic Senate vote.

Replies to the resolution ranged from "I don't want to stop my research for one day" to "I don't want to be associated in the public's mind as a striking professor". These are valid responses for a don't-get-involved generation; however, they may not be pertinent, much less honest. This becomes evident when we see that within the last two years, researchers on this campus received about $1,000,000 from agencies directly involved in the military. Two thirds of the individual projects were contracted directly by the Army and Navy.

To what extent does the military control the scientific community? A program designed to answer this specific question with regards to the Medical Center is slated for 12 noon to 1 p.m. today during the Day of Concern. It will be designed to better publicize how money for research is obtained from the military and to what extent the scientist obligated to the military in directing his research.

We are then led to other questions of the same sort, such as:

Why does the military want the kind of information gained by certain types of research?

Why is the military charged with funding these projects (i.e., why not other agencies)?

These are questions directly concerning scientists, their students and technical workers. There are obviously many other questions of a broader nature, for example: Why does the Army have money to develop chemical and biological weapons when there is so little money available to study new methods of feeding the world in the next decades?

We ask that you become involved in answering these questions. Stop work Tuesday, March 4, and attend the workshops.

Finally, we ask that students consider increased agitation for participation in the Academic Senate to prevent further instances of obvious hypocrisy.

Committee for Independent Political Action
in support of Union of Concerned Scientists