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Demonstrations, protests, and disruptions: rumor center. 1969/1970

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TEMPLE UNIVERSITY

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19122

VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS

December 15, 1970

Mr. Jack Burke
Managing Editor
Univ. News and Publications Serv.
University of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

Dear Mr. Burke:

Thank you very much for sending us a copy of your talk at the July meeting of ACPRA in Denver. I read it with great interest and acknowledge that your Rumor Center seems to be very effective in its operation.

Temple University, being a very sizeable institution also, would probably be able to very successfully employ such methods as you have described. It is gratifying to know that such a response from local and state people could be generated by your program. We certainly hope that ours will be as successful as yours has proven to be.

Thank you again for your help.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kevin R. Cadigan".

Kevin R. Cadigan
Assistant Director of
Student Relations

KRC:mcz

1970
ACPRA LUNCHEON
JULY 7 NOON

JACK BURKE, MANAGING EDITOR
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN NEWS SERVICE,
MADISON

Rumor
Center

The University of Wisconsin News Service strives at all times to give Wisconsin residents and others the true picture of what's happening on campus--when disruptions occur and during peace intervals.

There never has been an order to withhold news, and newsmen are always welcome on campus, to learn administrative decisions, to find out exactly what is happening.

When trouble does occur, newsmen are given all the help they ask for. We provide guides if requested, phone numbers, parking permits, whatever is needed.

We feel times of turmoil are definitely occasions to keep everyone fully informed, to let people know what the University of Wisconsin is doing to meet the challenge --and no punches are pulled.

On my state, the State University has special personal meaning. It is everybody's college, and news editors provide a lot of space for our news--in times of peace and during periods of stress.

Wisconsin people know the University always has been a place of free speech, free expression, and one that ranks high among the world's great institutions of higher learning.

I repeat--we do our best to let them know how their sons and daughters are doing on our 16 campuses, describe new programs, the activities of our faculty members, our findings in research, whatever.

-more-

Add one

I could speak on various phases of the student uprisings in recent years, but let me stress one innovation at Wisconsin that has proven quite successful--our Rumor Center.

The Rumor Center idea is not exactly original; one was set up in Chicago after Rev. Martin Luther King's death.

Two law professors in Madison thought it would be a good idea to take some of the phone call pressure off the chancellor's office, the News Service, the administrators, and others --and provide a public service at the same time.

Our first venture into the Rumor Center operation began in February, 1968, when trouble erupted over a series of 14 demands by our black students. The center was hastily organized, and its phone numbers spread around the state.

Law students volunteered to man the phones, and a member of the Law faculty joined me in supervising the operation. At once we started receiving calls from all over--from parents, students, faculty, and citizens--all eager to learn what was going on.

The center was set up on a big table in my office in Bascom Hall. The students on the phones worked shifts, between their own classes. They were paid an hourly rate for their services. But some regarded it as a worthwhile experience, and refused compensation.

We kept a record of every call, and during this first three-day disruption, there were some ³²⁵ callers keeping the phones buzzing.

The news media outside Wisconsin picked up our Rumor Center number, and calls came in for UW News Service reporters on this line.

-more-

Add two

I remember one call from NBC in New York, asking for a three-minute wrap-up of the current crisis situation. I asked for 10 minutes to prepare my copy, and called NBC back with a taped summation. About 20 minutes later I heard the NBC noon newscast go to the White House for a statement by Pres. Nixon.

When he finished, I heard the NBC announcer. . . "and now for a roundup of the campus uprising at the University of Wisconsin--and here's Jack Burke, managing editor of the News Service in Madison. . ."

I still wonder how he got on first.

Some graduate students have taken our record of that Rumor Center baptism and written theses on our tabulation and experience and impressions.

We quickly learned that students who called in placed more credibility on our information if the calls were answered by students. It is important that mature students only be employed as Rumor Center staffers.

The situations which develop require initiative, intelligence, and a power to react promptly.

The Rumor Center staff called certain key persons on campus to keep fully informed, up to the minute. The students on the phones did not guess, they did not say they knew something when they did not. They provided only authenticated news and information, validated by those in charge. If they did not know the answer to a question, they said so--and asked the caller to call back, or they called him--after they had checked it out.

Some of our center volunteers moved around the campus and called in, supplementing our other information sources.

-more-

Add three

Last February when another outbreak occurred on campus, the Rumor Center forces went back into action, with new volunteers coming from the UW School of Journalism. Our second experience was akin to our first.

And we were back in action once more in early May--this time for two full weeks.

Again most of the calls were quite routine--what's happening now? Is the National Guard on duty? Where are the demonstrators now? Are the buses running on campus? Is there a rally tonite? What is the chancellor doing about this--or that? Is there meal service in the dorms? Is it safe to go to classes?

Some of the calls, however, may be described only as weird.

One of the callers wanted to know the abortion rate in Madison. We felt like answering--one per fetus, but did not, of course. One girl wanted to know if the pom-pom team tryouts would be held that night. Another wanted to know if the kayak lessons would be cancelled. Here are some others: Is the governor divorcing his wife? Was there a raping on Langdon street last night? Are you shutting down the school? Where can an alien go to register? Where can I buy a gas mask? Can my daughter get her car? What's the difference between pepper gas and tear gas?

Maybe they weren't so weird, after all.

Last May we handled some 2,200 calls. A dozen or so of these came from other student strike centers around the country. UCLA called three times.

We feel the Rumor Center is a valuable asset during a campus conflict. We let everyone know the University is still in business. A lot of persons have told us we perform a public service of merit, one which augments our regular news service operation.

uw news

Rumor Center

From The University of Wisconsin News and Publications Service, Bascom Hall, Madison 53706 • Telephone: (608) 262-3571

Release: **Immediately**

5/5/70 jb

MADISON--The University of Wisconsin reported Tuesday that its Rumor Center, inactive since the teaching assistants' strike last month, has been resumed on the Madison campus.

New student dissension, beginning Tuesday, resulted in the decision to provide the service for students, faculty, and area residents. Information about the situation on campus is supplied by phoning 263-1983 or 263-1986.

Supervised by University officials, the phones are manned from 8 a.m. to early evening by student volunteers.

###

uw news

*Rumor
Center*

From The University of Wisconsin News and Publications Service, Bascom Hall, Madison 53706 • Telephone: (608) 262-3571
Immediately 3/16/70 jb

Release:

MADISON--Make a note of these telephone numbers:

263-1983 and 263-1986 .

These numbers have been given to the University of Wisconsin's Rumor Center in Bascom Hall.

Students, staff, faculty, and area residents are invited to call if they have questions relating to the Teaching Assistants' Association strike which began on the University's Madison campus Monday morning.

The center will be staffed each day from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The center was placed in operation initially 13 months ago when students demonstrated in behalf of 14 demands put forth by black students on the campus.

###

JACK BURKE:

Let's expand our communication by making use of the UNIVERSITY TELEPHONE OPERATORS when we are not manned at News Service or Rumor Center. Bob Devenish suggests we give a summary to the operator in charge when closing up shop for the evening.

This can be done by either calling the CHIEF OPERATOR at 2-3548 or by dialing ~~2~~ 0.

-- jack newman 5/11

The information will be used by the telephone operators in answering local and long distance calls from students, faculty, members of the community, and parents.

Rumor Centre

A. Personnel

① Faculty + Admin

Jack Burke, U. W. News Serv.
Stuart Bullington, Law School
Edw. Kimball, " "
Warren Johnson, " "

② Students

Tom Fox, Chilton, Wis.
Earl Hazeltine, Monroe, Wis.
John Heibl, Kerosha, Wis.
David Jewett, Madison, Wis.
Karen Krumbiegel, Milwaukee, Wis.
~~Robert Kinsey~~
John Rowe, Dodgeville, Wis.
Richard Thornton, Sheboygan, Wis.
Paul Wallig, ~~Sheboygan~~ Kerosha, Wis.
~~Roger Helges~~

③ Mitral Guard

Sgt. 4 Corby Wermuth
Sgt. Norman Senberg
Capt. Zweifel

RUMOR CENTER

U. WIS. - 2/14/69

(OVER)

TIME OF CALL

QUESTION

NUMBER TO CALL BACK

0955

Report of demonstration @ Union + Park w/o police

1002

Clarification of P-F Bldg. status

1006

① + ②

1008

②

1010

Telephone to checking

1018

New conf @ Union?

1014

1015

①

1028

Situation ①

1050

Location of CPT Zweifel? - 2623572

1055

New Service Call - Chic. Trib

1059

Are the police wearing badges that are visible?

1105

What is the location of the 127th IOP

1110

How long can the state finance the NG's presence of campus

1115

①

1119

①

1120

Prof. Madison called re. call from Robbhead @ U. NC.

1121

Are the NG or Police using tear gas or mace today?

1127

Any effort to prevent entrance to South Hall?

1134

Are the weapons loaded?

1147

①

11:55

Has mail been routed for David H. 78

11:56

②

(OVER)

2/14/69

a b c

Time of Call

Questions

NUMBER TO CALL BACK

11:57

Will living units be weekend target? of T.A.'s strike, back then? ^{will Transmitters}

11:58

When guard called, is Martial Law automatic?

12:08

Is State blocked? How is Campus Bus Service?

12:13

Wrong number

12:14

Is Harvey Breuscher in?

12:17

Is there a rally scheduled for tonight

12:26

are buses running?

12:31

①

12:44

Are dem's damaging autos?

12:50

①

12:52

Anyone shot this morning?

12:54

Truth to rumor that USAR will be called up?

12:56

Is Harvey Breuscher in?

1:00

Sister Anthony of St. Maria Lourdes called - found amok on front door do effect "To whom it may concern: There is a bomb in the boiler room. Signed X"

2387411

1:20

①

1:43

①

1:45

Any truth to rumor that Mark Budd is on campus?

1:50

Location of demonstrators?

2:00

①

2:02

What leg doing? What at the clock?

2:05

Is play ed bldg open

2:17

~~student~~ was someone arrested for protesting at bus load of cops.

2/14/69

Time of Call	Question	Type of Caller
2:42	Time of Rally - is new gym open	student C student
2:43	is travel open.	T
2:45	where are the attacks	T
2:47	do you put race down on financial aid form	C
2:48	buses on U. Ave	
2:50	St Louis - campus newspapers.	
3:09	Tear gas used today	C
3:10	who's running the news service	C
3:15	bayonets around Boreane	C
3:20	what - what's happening ①	C
3:21	arrests - how many	C
3:25	injuries	T
3:26	demonstration area	T
3:27	400 guards caught in burning Ad. building	
3:30	any problem at Park + Johnson	T
3:32	Buses still running	C
3:33	Meal disbursement	C
3:34	Class at Nat	C
3:36	What are student days on	T
3:40	what were 3 students arrested ^{onally} about U. Ave. for	C 262-7091
3:41	has U been closed for a wk.	T
3:45	what are 14 buses doing to U. hosp.	C C
3:52	gym open	C
3:52	guard on campus to protect for Milwaukee	

NY Page Test - Conner Bill
 267-3961

2/14/69

Time of call	Question	Type of caller
3:59	Guard going home?	
4:05	Order number 262-6983	
4:08	Guard leaving 267	C
4:10	⓪	C
4:12	Testing	T
4:19	traffic	
4:22	⓪ guard leaving	C
4:24	⓪ " "	C
4:25	⓪ " "	C
4:26	⓪ " "	C
4:28	TA meeting	C
4:29	car running thru crowd	C
4:30	⓪ guard leaving	C
4:35	⓪ " "	C
4:35	⓪ " "	C
4:36	⓪ " "	C
4:37	⓪ " "	C
4:39	who was hurt on state	C
4:39	rally	C
4:42	⓪ guard leaving	C
4:51	black girls being beat up	C
4:55	⓪	
4:59	rally	
5:00	⓪	

RAMOR CENTER
U. WIS. - 2/14/69

NUMBER
TO CALL
BACK

TIME
OF CALL

QUESTION

0920	will the Union Pa closed for a week.	
0922	are the demands of the changed.	
0923	Amount of Damage at Oshkosh	
0925	was the a demolition Campus the 2nd	
0935	What pledge will be fit What pledge will be fit	266-44
0936	What campus bus service?	2-6641 ✓
0942	①	
0945	①	
0947	Telephone Co wants to know time of next telecast -	
1022	Fone Co. checking line location	
10:25	Why are Capital doors locked <small>called cw</small>	266-1370
1026	3 people shot at Charter of UNIV	
10:30	#①	
10:32	What is Guard doing on Murray st <small>called cw</small>	262-4372
10:40	#①	
10:44	#①	
10:50	#①	
10:57	#①	
10:59	#①	
11:01	Can I ^{drive} go down University	
11:04	What size crowd on march to Capital <small>③ Person going to burn ^{in protest} to national Guard.</small>	
11:05	#①	
11:07	Bus service? classes?	

2/14/69 - Fri.
Rumor Center

Type of
Caller
Number to
Call
Back

Time of
Call

26540 Questions

11:24
11:32
11:33

Will there be a meeting in Gordon Commons today?

(1)
(1)
(1)

~~#1205~~

12:15

Natatorium open?

(2)

12:37

12:44

Are city buses running on State?

(1)

12:57

1:02

Gymnasium open?

1:05

Are guns loaded?

1:19

Campus bus? # (1)

1:26

Classes open? # (1)

1:47

Machine Guns (1)

2:04

Safe to go to Square

2:19

(1)

2:21

(1)

2:22

(1)

2:24

Kid hit by car?

2:24

New guard troops?

2:35

Does Rowlip have

Mike Briggs 26397
~~26397~~

list of 150 faculty members ^{to be} investigated

2:37

Was Auden named chancellor

2:55

Any disorder at Johnson + Gilman

Campus
T
C
C
C
C
C
C
T

~~3:05~~

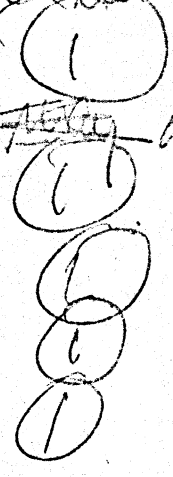
2/14/69

Type:
of
call

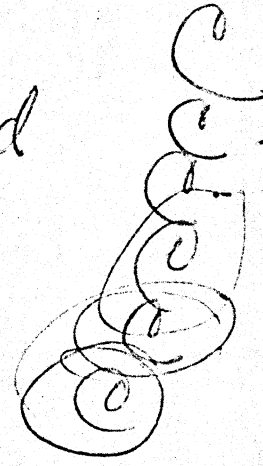
8:30
8:31
8:32
8:35
8:40
~~8:49:10~~

Questions

How ~~many~~ many reached



Type B.
calls -



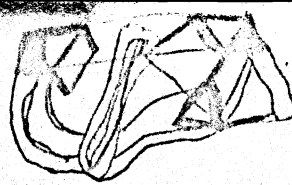
Mon. Feb. 17

Time	Call	Questions	Type of Caller
10:57		What is guard doing?	C
11:01		①	C
11:15		①	C
12:32		①	C
12:33		① Is Ken Coates hiding in Chicago?	C
12:40		①	T
12:43		① Take over Commerce Bldg?	T
12:47		How much are N. Ill. paid (individual)?	C
13:15		①	
13:20		What is the rumor center? Are R.C. people paid?	
13:40		Proposed takeover?	
13:45		What's happening?	C
13:50		What's happening?	C
2:30		① NBC news New York	OT
2:40		①	C
2:50		Did legislature pass T.A. Bill	C
2:55		①	
3:15		Where's rally	C
6:33		Was guard call up because former Mrs Knowles was demonstrated	C
6:41		What's happening	C
6:47		WKOW ① WKOW	C
7:11		①	C
7:14		①	C

Monday Feb. 17

Time	Questions	No. T.C.M.
8:00	Classes Being held today?	C
8:10	WKOW- tape - Rumor Center operations	
10:00	General Situation? call of NG.	
10:15	" "	
10:17	" "	
10:24	" " . Classes being held?	
10:35	Are Guard coming?	C
10:40	Did " leave campus?	C
10:50	Has the NG been called onto campus?	C
11:05	WLS - Chicago - general situation?	
11:14	What about proposed takeover of Adm. bldg?	
11:15	What are the plans of the demonstrators?	
11:29	①	C
11:33	①	
11:36	Will the students attempt a takeover of Adm?	
11:37	Why is the NG still on campus?	
11:40	Are the demonstrators currently in Adm?	
11:41	Attempted takeover of Adm - what steps by NG?	
11:50	What's going on at Bascom?	
11:51	①	
11:55	①	C
12:01	①	
12:01	①	
12:03	①	

Mon Feb 17



15-16

Demands

Time	Question	Type
12:14	Guard has fixed bayonets	C
12:22	Are students taking over Admin Building	C
12:23	"	C
12:32	①	C
12:34	Take over Admin Building	C
12:36	①	C
12:40	Busses Running	C
12:46	Take over Admin Building	C
12:48	Guard back	C
12:56	Is Rumor Center for real	C
12:57	①	C
13:12	①	C
13:15	Take over Admin Building	C
13:37	①	C
13:40	①	C
13:45	What are the 13 demands?	C
13:54	①	C
14:08	Is mat. available for use?	C
14:15	Who has been arrested?	C
14:20	Where are the strikers located?	C
14:22	Why were N.G. recalled to campus proper?	C
14:25	Shelton at Van Ness?	C
14:29	How much in M.L. King Sch. Fund?	C
14:37	①	C

Mon Feb 17

Time	Question	Code
2:38	①	
2:42	①	
2:44	Mr. Douma re: Martin Luther King Mem. Fund	
2:46	Questions re: Martin " " " "	
2:47	①	
2:50	City Bus service - see info sheet	
2:55	Does Cap. Toms know of service?	
3:00	①	
3:05	①	
3:12	As admin waiting for incidence by SDS members as grounds for expulsion	
3:30	①	
4:00	①	
4:10	①	
4:15	①	
4:18	What is administration doing about demonstrations + A Bill before legislature	
4:53	have students tabernacle building	
5:10	①	
5:20	①	
5:49	①	
7:35	①	
7:45	Are guns loaded	
7:53	①	

T
/

C
/

Mon Feb 17

Time	Questions	Type
7:54	Is Natatorium open	C
8:00	What's happening at rally	C
8:15	Any negotiations	C

Tues. FEB. 18

0820	WKOW Report	off C
0825	More troops on campus?	C
0900	How prosecute prof who are not meeting w/ their classes?	C
0907	Is Univ. funding religious center on campus? (Hittel & Wesley)	?
0930	What's going to happen in front of Ag Hall?	C
0939	Current situation?	C
0940	Religious groups on campus - get \$ help from state?	C
10:13	①	T
10:20	Why troops in Baptist Student Center	C
10:27	Why city buses didn't run by Campus yesterday	
10:28	WLS - Chicago - re status	off C
10:29	①	
10:40	③	?
10:44	What's Harrington doing	?
10:47	Are campus buses running	C

Feb 18 Tues

Time	Questions	Type
10:55	③ Use (all) fireboxes	T
11:12	How to get rid of all. Soglin	T
11:33	①	
11:45	WTMJ - what + by whom - charges against Skelton	
11:50	① WKOW	
11:52	①	T
12:07	Any rally today	C
12:33	What, if any, NG units have been released?	Concerned Wife
12:42	Is the Nat. available for recreation?	
12:45	Is Elroy Hirsch the new Adm. Director?	

Left at 1:05

John

THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
LAW SCHOOL

MADISON, WISCONSIN 53706

March 5, 1969

M E M O R A N D U M

To: Chancellor Edwin H. Young
From: Stuart Gullickson, Lecturer, Law School
Subject: Rumor Center

This memo is to record our experience with the Rumor Center during the recent period of disorder on our campus. A Rumor Center attempts to make reliable information easily available by telephone at a time of potential mass hysteria. The goal is to spike rumors with facts in order to reduce tensions. The University's Rumor Center operated for two and one-half days, and answered approximately 325 telephone calls. It was manned by law students under the joint supervision of the Law School faculty and University News Service.

BIRTH OF THE RUMOR CENTER

I do not know all of the administrative steps which led to the creation of the Rumor Center, but here is the general pattern. A Rumor Center had been used with success on a few occasions elsewhere in the country, one of them being in Chicago during the riot following the death of Martin Luther King. The suggestion to try a Rumor Center here originated with Professors Herman Goldstein and Frank Remington of the Law School faculty. On Thursday morning, February 13, Professor Goldstein suggested to Chancellor Young and his staff that a Rumor Center be set up. At that time, a portion of our student body was demonstrating in support of demands of a portion of our Black students. Madison police and Wisconsin National Guard troops were on our campus keeping the University open for classes. The suggestion for a Rumor Center was embraced enthusiastically by Chancellor Young, and he asked Dean Spencer Kimball of the Law School, and Mr. Harvey Breuscher of the University News Service to establish it. Dean Kimball appointed three members of the Law School faculty as a steering committee: Professors Edward Kimball and Warren Lehman, and Stuart Gullickson, Lecturer. It was understood that Mr. Gullickson should devote as much time as necessary in order to get the Rumor Center underway. Mr. Breuscher appointed Mr. Jack Burke of the University News Service to work on the project, and Mr. Burke made his

office available as the Rumor Center location. Mr. Breuscher arranged for two telephones to be installed in Mr. Burke's office on the evening of February 13. Mr. Burke informed the news media of the establishment of the Rumor Center and its existence was reported on Friday, February 14, in the Daily Cardinal, Wisconsin State Journal, and over the local radio stations. Our first telephone calls came in before 9:00 a.m. on Friday, and that first day we processed approximately 200 calls.

On the afternoon of February 14, 3500 letter-sized leaflets were distributed throughout student housing units in the campus area announcing the existence of the Rumor Center, and giving its telephone numbers: 262-0100 and 262-0101.

RUMOR CENTER PERSONNEL

The National Guard cooperated completely. It made its information sources available, and furnished personnel. Initially the telephones were manned by Specialist Fourth Class Wermuth of the National Guard Public Information staff under the command of Captain Zweifel. By mid-morning on February 14, law students were recruited to take over the phones. These are the law students who worked at the Rumor Center and recruited personnel: Tom Fox, Earl Hazeltine, John Heibl, David Jolivette, Karen Krumbiegel, John Rowe, Richard Thornton, and Paul Wallig. Dean Kimball and Mr. Gullickson have sent letters of appreciation to these students.

METHOD OF OPERATION

We found that a three-man student team worked best. This allowed for two people on the telephones and one as an information gatherer. The telephone answerers answered the question if they could, or if they could not answer it immediately they offered to take the caller's number and call back with the answer. If the caller did not wish to leave his number (and few did), the answerer suggested the caller call back in a few minutes by which time the answerer would have the information. The answerers were instructed by Mr. Gullickson to answer only with facts, and not editorialize. They were instructed to give factual responses regardless of whether they thought the facts may embarrass the Administration.

We used a variety of information sources, and which one we used depended upon whether the inquiry was tactical or non-tactical. To answer tactical inquiries ("Is there a disturbance at the Sociology Building?"), we used the facilities of the National Guard Public Information Office in charge of Captain Zweifel. That office was in direct contact with the National Guard command post. Captain Zweifel's staff was operating in a University News Service Office only two doors from the Rumor Center. Rumor Center Personnel did not investigate the tactical situation on their own.

We gathered information to answer non-tactical inquiries by first checking with Jack Burke. ("Are the campus buses running?"; "Does University money support the Hillel Foundation and the Wesley Foundation?"). Mr. Burke was able to answer more than half of the non-tactical inquiries with information he knew offhand from his long experience on campus. If he was not sure of the answer, he was able to tell Rumor Center personnel whom they should telephone to get the answer.

Rumor Center personnel attended the news conferences held by the Chancellor and by the Commanding General of the Guard, and attended the morning and evening student rallies.

At the time information was gathered it was reduced to writing so that it could be used by other telephone answering teams not then on duty.

The Rumor Center operated from 8:00 a.m. to approximately 9:30 p.m. on Friday, February 14. About 3:15 p.m. that afternoon Chancellor Young announced the National Guard was being withdrawn from the immediate campus. The Rumor Center was not open on Saturday or Sunday because there were no campus disturbances then, although we were prepared to open it at any time if the need arose. The Rumor Center operated from 8:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Monday, February 17, and the student demonstrations resumed that morning. On Tuesday, February 18, the Rumor Center operated from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and the dissident students announced that morning that demonstrations were called off indefinitely. The law students and Mr. Gullickson returned to their normal duties Tuesday afternoon. The Rumor Center telephones remained in Mr. Burke's office, and he took what calls came in thereafter.

THE CALLS RECEIVED

The primary purpose of the Rumor Center was to spike rumors. Here are some of the rumors we were asked about:

"Have the National Guard or police used tear gas or Mace today?"

"Is the United States Army Reserve being called up?"

"Was someone shot this morning?"

"Is Mark Rudd on campus?"

"Is Bob Cohen on campus?"

"Has the Guard bared their bayonets around Bascom Hill?"

"Are 400 Guards caught in a fire in the Administration Building?"

"Has the University been closed for a week?"

"Are Black girls being beaten up?"

"Is there a car running through a crowd on State Street?"

"Is there a fire in Bascom Hall?"

"Did the police use clubs tonight?"

"Were three people shot at the intersection of Charter and University?"

"Does Mr. Roselip have a list of 150 faculty members to be investigated?"

"Have students taken over the Commerce Building?"

"Have students taken over the Administration Building?"

Another group of significant inquiries sought factual data on the substantive issues. These calls included:

"Is the University financially supporting campus religious centers?"

"How much money is in the Martin Luther King Fund?"

"How many dollars of damage was done at Oshkosh?"

"Have there been any negotiations between the Administration and the Black students?"

"What is the status in the Legislature of the Bill dealing with teaching assistant's salaries?"

As a call was answered, Rumor Center personnel wrote down the time of the call, and the nature of the question. After the first six hours of operation we began writing down the answerer's impression of the identity of the caller. The answerer recorded whether he thought the caller was from our campus (student or faculty), or from off campus. Where the answerer had no impression of identity he recorded a question mark. Eighty-five calls came in before we attempted to record the identity of the caller. It was our impression that of the remaining calls 115 were from students or faculty, 32 from off-campus, and the identity of 93 were doubtful.

We answered approximately 200 calls on Friday, 100 calls on Monday, and 25 calls Tuesday morning.

One-hundred twenty-one callers asked about the tactical situation, such as: "Has there been a take-over of the Administration Building?"; "What is going on in front of Bascom Hall?". Eleven asked what buses were operating on campus and in the immediate area. Eleven

asked whether classes were being conducted, or whether specific buildings were open. Ten asked whether the National Guard troops had been removed. Five asked what the future tactics of the demonstrators were going to be. Five asked about the time of future press conferences or rallies. Five asked about the creation of the Rumor Center. Five were from news media seeking a story (four from out of state and one local). The remaining 149 calls do not lend themselves to generalization.

SOME CONCLUSIONS

I believe there is a place for a Rumor Center in the total array of communication techniques to be used on this campus at a time of crisis. Perhaps the Rumor Center should be continued on a limited basis during calm times, and expanded and publicized during a time of crisis.

During periods of ferment the telephones should be manned by students, rather than faculty or staff personnel. Our students make up the audience the Rumor Center is primarily trying to reach, and our students will be more inclined to accept the credibility of the Rumor Center if the calls are answered by students. However, it is important that only mature students be used. In general, graduate students are more desirable for this reason than undergraduates. The opportunity to man the Rumor Center should first be given to students in those schools whose field is related to Rumor Center functions. It seems to me that this would include students dealing in mass communication, law students, and history students.

Students should not be given the erroneous impression when they are recruited for the Rumor Center that they will be used as investigators of the tactical situation. It is quicker and more reliable to use police or National Guard command headquarters as sources for tactical information.

If the Rumor Center is to be used in the future, it should be reorganized now during a period of calm. The personnel should be recruited now. It is difficult to recruit personnel during a disturbance because the students are hesitant to volunteer for fear other students will think they are "taking sides" with the Administration.

The Rumor Center's access to tactical information should be improved. The National Guard was just about to cut the Rumor Center directly into its communication network when the strike was called off. This would be a valuable improvement. At the same time it would require the use of good judgment by Rumor Center personnel to avoid transmitting unsubstantiated data. However, selectivity is required no matter what information source is used. It is important that a faculty member be present as a part of each shift of students working in the Center to try to assure that the Center transmits only substantiated information.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I recommend an ad hoc committee be appointed now to make plans for use of a Rumor Center if the need arises again. The committee might include a representative from the Chancellor's staff, Campus Police, University News Service, Law School, School of Journalism, History Department, and from any other school or department likely to be recruiting students and faculty to man the Center. Some functions of this committee would be to:

1. Recruit students and faculty now to man the Center;
2. Arrange now for the cooperation in times of crises of information sources;
3. Publicize the Rumor Center;
4. Make provisions now for equipment;
5. Work out procedures for processing calls, and decide what data to record respecting each call;
6. Work out procedures for information gathering.

(After this report was dictated, the Rumor Center was reopened on the afternoon of February 27th when some students resumed demonstrations. The Center continued in operation until noon of March 4th, the day following the faculty meeting at which the proposal for a Black Studies Department was adopted. During this period the Rumor Center was operated in conjunction with personnel from the School of Journalism, as well as from the Law School and University News Service. No data from this second period of operation is included in this report.)