

Statement by Robert D. Clark, President, University of Oregon
to Faculty Meeting, February 4, 1970

Re: Demonstrations Against Weyerhaeuser Recruiters,
February 3, 1970

Basic to the character of the University of Oregon is its open campus tradition--set forth in a classic statement on the right of inquiry, free discourse, and respect for privacy. These traditions, and indeed the rules, of this University with respect to these matters are too well established and widely understood to warrant further elucidation at this time. What happened in and around the Placement Office in Susan Campbell Hall yesterday appears to be clearly in violation both of our tradition and our rules. Students legitimately seeking information about possible employment and career opportunities allegedly were denied access to that information, while at the same time visitors to the campus, here on legitimate business and at the University's invitation, were harassed and deprived of their rightful opportunity to carry out their assignment.

Such disruption of and interference with an activity which is appropriate to and consistent with the University's operation cannot be countenanced. It will not be tolerated.

I said to you last fall at the opening meeting of the faculty that the University must be responsible for order within its own community, that it ought, through its own procedures, to take any disciplinary action necessary to the observance of its own rules. For that reason, students who were engaged

yesterday's disruptive activities will be cited to appear before the appropriate disciplinary bodies.

However, I am told by many in the University Community that the Student Conduct Code is ineffective and cannot deal with the problem. Many concerned students are strongly of the opinion that our procedures are competent and that those guilty of infraction will be dealt with swiftly and equitably. I want to give these procedures every chance to prove themselves.

At the same time, we cannot stand idly by and allow this incident to go unnoticed if, indeed, the student courts or the Conduct Committee fail to function, or if the Code does not cover the disruptive incidents or if persons involved are not subject to the Code. In any event the following course is open to us:

The provisions of the Trespass law, enacted by the Legislature, were called to the attention of disrupters by a representative of my office, who requested them to desist and leave the building or be subject to arrest. For students, if the disciplinary procedures of the University fail to function, we shall proceed immediately to cite them to the courts. For non-students, to whom the Code does not apply, we shall ask the courts to act with all possible promptness.

I have one further word to state. If the student code proves not to be operative or effective, then we must proceed at once with emergency measures which will be in force until the code is revised and made effective. The policy of the State Board of Higher Education and the Administrative Code of the State provide that "Each institution, through its president, is charged with the responsibility for maintaining appropriate standards of conduct of its students, and is authorized to expel, dismiss, suspend, and place limitations on continued attendance and to levy reasonable fines and penalties for disciplinary violations."

If it becomes necessary I shall, with the advice of the faculty, establish an ad hoc disciplinary committee to deal with cases of student disruption until such time as the Conduct Code is made effective. I ask for faculty endorsement of this proposed action.

I have tried to be considerate and not arbitrary in this statement. I have tried to observe the rights of the students, but I feel equally obligated to protect those whose rights may have been infringed, and to protect the character of this University. I believe that the great majority of faculty and students will support me.