

Chancellor McGill's statement concerning strike at UCSD

May 21, 1969

Statement by Chancellor William J. McGill

The extraordinary emotional climate in which we live probably explains some of the demagoguery and the wild proposals we heard from several speakers at the noon convocation of the UCSD academic community in the Gymnasium today. I listened in grim sadness heartened only by the reaction of a majority of those present who seemed as repelled as I was by the notion of an academic strike. UCSD is not on strike and will not be so long as there is a professor who will teach and a student who will listen.

This afternoon the Academic Senate moved to recommend to their colleagues that they devote all regular classes on Thursday and Friday to a discussion of events on the Berkeley campus. I repudiate this recommendation. This is not teaching in the traditions of UCSD's great faculty. It is the basest form of indoctrination. No one can downgrade the concern we all must feel for Berkeley's week of tragedy and violence. I express that concern via my own commitment to reason and debate to peaceful change and nonviolence. I will not attempt to indoctrinate my students.

I call on all members of the UCSD faculty to meet their professional responsibilities to the education of their students--to do so on Thursday and Friday and every other day. All of us owe this debt to the great academic traditions which brought us into the University, and to the people who sustain us in our work.

I intend to meet my class this week and I plan to teach it with every bit of zeal and commitment I possess. This is the only way I know to express my own conception of duty and responsibility.