STUDENT STRIKE

On May 5 the Associated Students of Temple Buell College voted to strike from Wednesday, May 6, through Sunday, May 11, along with students from the University of Colorado's Denver Center, Metro State College, and D.U. The strike genuinely protested, for many, the violent deaths of the four students at Kent State and the extension of the Viet Nam conflict into Cambodia. The pattern of initiation was probably the same across the country—a telephone call from another student body president, organization of protest marches, mass meetings, strike votes.

A second student meeting was held May 6. The pre-announced and controversial motion on the floor was "to close the school the week of May 11 and to remain on campus to work constructively for the purpose of the protest." There was standing room only at the meeting in Robert Lloyd Corkin Theater, with faculty and staff interspersed among over 700 students. The administration was asked for a statement, and the official position statement was read by Dr. Paul Jenson, Vice President for Academic Affairs:

Temple Buell College recognizes and protects the rights of individuals to express orderly dissent, and it recognizes the rights of individuals not to dissent or to express their protest in their own individual manner.

To quote the Student Handbook of Temple Buell College, "Individuals who participate in demonstrations on campus must conduct themselves in a manner that will not cause harm or injury to any individual, disrupt the conduct of college affairs, or damage or destroy property."

The administration strongly recommends that faculty members consider awarding grades of incompletes to those students who because of the prevailing circumstances are unable to complete the requirements of the course within the scheduled time limit.

Discussion on the motion was lively. Interchange at the meetings was kept well in hand by the chair, manned by newly-elected student president Amy Faunce (Lincoln, Mass.). Some of the students spoke emotionally, all had to speak loudly to be heard, and a few came directly to the point. Included in the debate: the country is in bad shape and "most students are just sitting around"; May 11 is finals week; the school can officially be closed only by the administration; strikes don't seem to have much effect on the government; seniors receiving incompletes might not be able to graduate May 17; no real plans have been proposed for use of time during that week and many students would leave campus; parents might withdraw funds; many students don't want to strike. One student emphasized that the protest originally condemned violent acts on the part of students as well as law-enforcing agencies and that this central point in the protest should not be submerged. One faculty member said that the most effective protest is steady, year-in, year-out organizing and working for what one believes should be done. The administration reminded the students that they always had had the right to cut classes. Everyone who wished to speak was heard. It turned out that a "strike unofficially closing the school for May 11 week" was voted down by a good majority.

The strike days of May 6, 7, and 8 were a little confusing as far as classes went. A few faculty joined in the protest and did not hold classes. Most faculty held classes whether or not they were sympathetic with the student action. A rough count of class attendance indicated that it was running about half, if not better. A "type-in" was held in The Union to write protests to government representatives. Wednesday evening in Whatley Chapel students presented a program in "Celebration of Life," and afterwards alternated reading aloud names of the living—students and American soldiers—all night long, by candlelight. An all-day and evening "teach-in" was held on Thursday. Faculty in economics, sociology, philosophy, history, and political science discussed with students U.S. foreign policy past and present, basics of the democratic system, and concepts of human rights and responsibility. Some students participated in protest marches to the State Capitol. The American flag was dropped to half mast in memory of the dead Kent students, both on campus and at the State Capitol, by student request.

One thing for sure: there is a great deal of energy and idealism among today's youth. The message should not be lost in criticism of the methods. One student answered a group of adults, "You were pro-football or pro-college when you were in school. We're not even so much pro-nation as pro-world. That's the difference."

But certainly not the only one.