

## **Module 09: The 1960s: Who Won? Student Protest and the Politics of Campus Dissent**

### **Evidence 11: Ed Miller, Guest Editorial, May 1970**

# A

#### **Introduction**

Although written to applaud the wave of student activism that rocked VPI in the spring of 1970, the editorial below reveals hidden dimensions of the student political landscape at state universities like Tech.

#### **Questions to Consider**

- How does the writer characterize the political climate up to this point in time?
- How politically active and engaged had the university's overall student population historically been?

#### **Document**

Virginia Tech is finally entering the realm of student activism which many other universities have experienced. The killing of seven Kent State students and the news that the Nixon administration has gone from the Vietnam War to the Indochina War was too much for even Tech students to stomach.

On May 5, the SGA [Student Government Association] Senate passed a motion supporting a student strike at VPI and an associate bill allocating \$700 to get Jerry Rubin, one of the Chicago Seven, to speak at Tech May 7. Tuesday night, while the Senate was in the process of considering the bills, approximately 40 students entered the SGA Senate to show their support for the bill. This type of student support is very rare at VPI. After the students left the Senate meeting, a larger crowd gathered and they proceeded to President Hahn's home to ask for his support of the student strike called for by the SGA Senate. . . .

The SGA Senate is finally beginning to become more than just a Tuesday night meeting. Students are beginning to take more of an interest in their student senate. They are finding out that they can work through channels if

they show support for their own cause.

Tech students are beginning to show some concern for events which will affect their own lives and the lives of other students. Many Tech students are beginning to realize that much education is gained outside the classroom.

If the students stick together in their demands, they can make their views known and influence decisions both on their own campus and within their environment. Perhaps if all students voiced their opinions, another Kent State could be prevented and the future political leaders of American would take the students' demands into account before entering another Vietnam.

Go to Washington May 11 [for a major national march] to protest Nixon's decision to involve U.S. troops in Cambodia.

Source:

Ed Miller, Guest Editorial, *The Collegiate Times* (8 May 1970), 2.