# MAYFLOWER HILL

## A History of Colby College

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COLBY COLLEGE

Published by University Press of New England

Hanover and London

Colby College
Published by University Press of New England,
One Court Street, Lebanon, NH 03766
www.upne.com


Printed in the United States of America
5 4 3 2 1



Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Smith, Earl H.
Mayflower Hill : a history of Colby College / Earl H. Smith. — 1st ed.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN-13: 978–1–58465–604–3 (cloth : alk. paper)
ISBN-10: 1–58465–604–2 (cloth : alk. paper)
1. Colby College—History. I. Title.
(Recap) LD1061.C72S65 2006
378.741'6—dc22 2006018623



TO BARBARA

In June, a joint committee of the American Association of University Professors, the National Student Association, the Association of American Colleges, the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, and the National Association of Women Deans and counselors gathered in Washington, D.C., and wrote a *Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students.* The comprehensive document set forth new standards for the protection of student rights in the classroom, in the keeping of student records, in student affairs, and in off-campus activities. It also established procedural standards for disciplinary proceedings. The Colby faculty adopted the statement in November 1970. It remains the definitive document on student rights.

The move to full coeducation was more than mere ceremony. There were structural changes as well. The divisions of men and women disappeared, a single-student judicial system was created, and various student records and lists were blended. The offices of dean of men and dean of women were abolished. Dean of Men Nickerson retired and Dean of Women Frances Seaman became the first dean of students and served a year. When Strider assistant Jonas Rosenthal became dean in the fall of 1968, he had two associate deans and a new office of student activities.

A trained sociologist, Rosenthal was open to new ideas in residential life and to extending the new rights and freedoms, but he was caught in a time warp. Students often saw him as being too conservative; some of his colleagues, above and below in the pecking order, thought he was too liberal—and soft on crime. Others, like Gene Peters (philosophy), thought the administration should back off and let students decide things for themselves.[39] Peters spoke from the left. He wrote that if the College felt obligated to provide for the social and moral cultivation of students [and it did], then it should satisfy this obligation "by yielding its authority and giving students the opportunity to cultivate themselves." Quite likely, he said, "The social habits and moral standards the students will adopt will not coincide with those the College would have struck upon. Why should they?" Rosenthal replied that it was not that simple. "Students should have plenty of responsibility for their own social and moral development," he wrote, but the College "should also accept the responsibility to pass on to students guidelines and models for methods of making decisions."

The new system was made manifest at Commencement 1968. Graduates marched to the platform to claim their degrees in a single line, alphabetically, by surname. A woman, Jessie McGuire of Fanwood, New Jersey, led the parade as the first all-senior valedictorian and class marshal.

39. Peters left teaching to study medicine and later practiced as a respected Waterville obstetrician.



## "STOP, CHILDREN, WHAT'S THAT SOUND?"

*Rock 'n' roll became rock, and Buffalo Springfield warned to look around and see what was going down. Battle lines were being drawn. Once-docile baby boomers were becoming disillusioned, confused, and angry. The nation was building a nuclear ability to destroy the world ten times over, and there was a troubling and deepening war in Vietnam. In a seeming instant, many young people turned away from the established order and began to assert themselves in ways their elders did not comprehend: their music, their drugs, their hair, and the clothes they did and did not wear. Like so many others, they faced the inner conflict between patriotism and a war they found absurd. At the end of the day students forced their government to stop the fight. Along the way, they were often grim and quarrelsome.*

Shortly after the ill-fated 1961 invasion of Cuba, President Kennedy sent three thousand military advisers to help the South Vietnamese in their long war against the Vietcong. At home, there was little notice or objection. Providing help for South Vietnam was nothing new. The United States had been sending advisers there since 1956 when the French, tired of the ten-year Indochina stalemate, simply went home.

The war did not come into national focus until August 1964, when the new president, Lyndon Johnson, claimed North Vietnamese PT boats had fired on U.S. destroyers while they patrolled in the Gulf of Tonkin. Within two days Congress gave the president authority to take "all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against forces of the United States." Whether the gulf attack actually occurred—most said later that it hadn't—the door was open to a larger war. In early 1965 two battalions of Marines went to protect the American air base at Da Nang, and almost overnight the country had eighty thousand troops at war. College students knew many of them. They were high school classmates who, by choice or circumstance, had not gone on to college.

At first there were only a few Colby antiwar activists, mere yeast in a bowl of uncertainty. Within five years their numbers swelled to a clamoring majority. U.N. Secretary-General U Thant of Burma was the commencement speaker in the spring of 1965. He told seniors there was a whole range of scientific, political, and economic activity "which cry out for youthful vigor and intelligence." They already knew it. Over that summer students were part of demonstrations in cities across the country. In August, Johnson signed a law

criminalizing draft card burning; in November protesters encircled the White House and burned them just the same.

By Christmas, U.S. combat troops reached 385,000. Six thousand had been killed. More troops were needed, and when 1966 began, Johnson called for an end to deferments. Students would be measured by their academic standing; those with the lowest grades would be called first. The *Portland Evening Express* said the government was "playing God," creating privilege for those who scored well and finding "cannon fodder" among the rest. The Colby faculty concurred. Dean of Faculty Parker Johnson wrote General Lewis Hershey, director of the Selective Service, to criticize any deferment for college students at all, and especially the new policy of protecting only those who tested well. All the while, the College supplied local draft boards with class standings. A year later (1967) the draft was reorganized again. This time the youngest would go first, chosen by lottery from among eligible eighteen-year-olds. Registrar George Coleman explained the new rules in the *Echo,* where editorials reflected the sullen mood of students and acknowledged there was no sign of the kind of patriotism that had ignited past generations in time of war. The war, the paper said, "seems to arouse a feeling that more closely resembles resentment than loyalty."

Although few students were ever drafted, at the time their fate was uncertain, and they began to scramble for ways to avoid or delay being sent into combat: ROTC, the National Guard, graduate school, or even flight to Canada. The College staff soon included a part-time draft counselor.[40]

The war was coming home in more powerful ways than by the looming draft. In September 1967, sixteen months after his graduation, Marine lieutenant Philip McHale '66 returned to campus to speak. The platoon leader had been wounded in combat a few months before. Ten of his men were killed. He told his former schoolmates the war could not be won. A month later, two dozen students and faculty joined 100,000 antiwar demonstrators at the Pentagon. David Dillinger and Jerry Rubin organized the Washington rally where 10,000 students gave up their draft cards. On the campus, a silent vigil was held around the war memorial flagpole near the library. Jerry Boren and Tom

40. The best-known resistor and antihero was the world heavyweight boxing champion, Cassius Clay, who became a Muslim, changed his name to Muhammad Ali, and declared the war violated his religious principles. Denied status as a conscientious objector, he refused induction into the army and was imprisoned. The World Boxing Association stripped him of his title. Ali had a strong Maine following. Two years before he had fought in Lewiston, knocking out Sonny Liston in defense of his title. Maine governor John Reed now said he should be "held in utter contempt by every patriotic American."



Jenkins, 1969 classmates, reported back to Colby, saying the Washington crowd represented a cross-section of young America, and they were not, as reporters described them, all "hippies" and "wild-eyed extremists."

> The stomping around was not always about war. The year before a group calling itself CORA (Colby Organization for Roses in America) marched on behalf of Maine Senator Margaret Chase Smith's campaign to make the rose the national flower. Smith, who wore a rose every day, was at the moment doing battle with Everett Dirkson, the gravelly-voiced Illinois senator who wanted the marigold. (Twenty years later, President Ronald Reagan signed a resolution making the rose the "national floral emblem.") A group of some one hundred, led by sophomore class and CORA president Philip Merrill '68, marched to the Blaine House in Augusta, rang the doorbell, and tried to present a red rose to Cora, the wife of Governor John Reed. She wouldn't let them in, and so they crossed the road to the governor's office where security guards agreed to admit only one, Thomas Rippon '68, who presented Reed a small bouquet. Abbott Meader (art) chastised organizers for making light of the serious and effective tool of protest. Robert Hughes '68, one of the CORA conveners and soon to be Navy serviceman aboard the U.S.S. *Intrepid,* later noted the "spoof" was mounted just before students began to realize the horror of Vietnam.

Robert Reuman (philosophy) knew more than a little about civil disobedience. He had declared his status as a conscientious objector during World War II, and while he strongly opposed the Vietnam War, he thought the students were unfocused, and their causes, undefined. Resentment, frustration, and hostility, he told an *Echo* reporter, were leading them to pick the wrong targets and express themselves in the wrong ways. He said local authority figures, including Strider, were merely "accidental targets." Reuman blamed the unrest on the war, Kennedy's death, and disappointment in Johnson's leadership. He also blamed television, noting that the first TV college generation was accustomed to being entertained, expected instant dramatics, and needed to experiment in vivid ways.[41]

41. Television had more than a sociological impact; it was the principal purveyor of a growing sense of the horror of war as well. Just as Vietnam began getting bigger pieces of the evening news, a satellite transmitted the first transatlantic television signal. On

War opinion on the campus was still sharply divided. In November 1967 half the Colby faculty and administrative staff (seventy-one) signed a statement in opposition to the war. A month later, a Stu-G poll showed only 27 percent of the students wanted "unequivocal withdrawal" of American troops. An equal number thought the United States should invoke a ceasefire for six months "to bring Hanoi to the peace table." The local *Sentinel* construed the poll results to mean Colby students were more hawkish than the faculty. The antiwar faction added the student numbers together, claiming a majority opposed the war.

In January 1968, a small group carried protest signs outside the Eustis building, while inside students interviewed for jobs with Dow Chemical Company, makers of napalm; in March, student and faculty demonstrators held a sit-in at an army recruiting booth in the lobby of Roberts Union. Counterdemonstrators, many of them on their way to lunch on the ground floor, blocked the door to the union, chided the protestors, and dropped bars of soap on their heads. (A prevailing stereotype placed war protestors among the unwashed.) Deans worried not only about what the dissidents had up their tie-dyed shirtsleeves, but also about their safety. Navy recruiters, slated for an information session the next day, said they feared violence and canceled.

The counterdemonstration was predictable. Some students wanted to inquire about signing up. Most others, including those who were adamantly against the war, agreed they had the right. Just as recruiters converged on the campus, student friends of Leslie Dickinson Jr. '67 were mourning his death. The Patten, Maine, student left college in the middle of his junior year to join the Marines, and on January 31, 1968, a day before his twenty-third birthday, he was mortally wounded near Quang Nam. He died three days later.

The spring brought more assassinations. The Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. was killed on April 4. Strider and student Stu-G president Henry Thompson '69 spoke at memorial services in town and on the Hill. "Our hearts go out to those who have labored, black and white, for Dr. King's cause," Strider said. "This is America's cause, and we are failing." Strider led a campus-community drive to raise money for the United Negro College Fund in King's memory. Some $16,000 came in, at the time the largest contribution of any educational institution. Students marched solemnly from the campus to the packed Opera

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July 10, 1962, European viewers saw a picture of an American flag waving at Telstar's U.S. earth station in Andover, Maine, and stations in England and France sent signals back. The war was soon seen live in American living rooms. If that wasn't vivid enough, in 1965 the networks added color.



House service in town, where Thompson, the first black president of the student body, warned that while "advocacy of violence is a nullification of the identity of Dr. King," the killing nonetheless would cause many "to cross over to the militant policies of violence." He was right. A month later, Robert Kennedy, a front-runner for the Democratic nomination for the presidency, was killed as well. The two deaths and the war touched off a summer of urban riots, and in the fall, students returned to college itching for a fight.

Lyndon Johnson had withdrawn from the presidential race, and with Robert Kennedy gone, war opponents turned to Eugene McCarthy, and worked through the summer for his nomination. They felt betrayed when Democrats, slugging it out at a violence-filled convention in Chicago, narrowly chose Hubert Humphrey to oppose Richard Nixon in the fall. Peace activists had little use for Nixon or his vice presidential candidate, Spiro Agnew. Humphrey had been forced on them, and even in Maine the choice of the state's junior senator, Ed Muskie, as his running mate made little difference. (Nor did it make much difference to students that in Maine, Democratic Party head George Mitchell made Strider the chair of the state's party platform committee.)

On Election Day, with hordes of national reporters tagging along, the Muskies cast their votes at the old South Grammar School. Student protestors lined Silver Street, one hundred yards away, chanting "free elections now," and "one, two, three, four, we won't fight your dirty war." Across the street, a smaller group of counterdemonstrators heckled the protestors and yelled at them to take baths. The past summer of demonstrations had proven that a police presence only made things worse. During the Election Day face-off in Waterville, Mayor Donald Marden kept the cops around the corner, out of sight. That winter he asked the city council to buy them riot gear.

On the Hill, authorities were worried. Dean of Students Rosenthal assembled a group to puzzle ways of dealing with trouble that was sure to come. He circulated a confidential discussion paper describing protest scenarios, and outlining rules for response: avoid violence at all costs, listen carefully to the protestors, call in outside authorities only as a last resort, offer no amnesty, and leave all public comment to the president's office. The guidelines were needed. The uprisings were unpredictable. Whenever demonstrators headed to the Eustis building, secretaries in the ground-floor business office lowered and locked the steel curtains at the service counter and hid. Protestors knew there was nothing to fear, but the hysterical reaction was pleasing just the same.

In late October, some suspected antiwar sabotage in the burning of the makeshift Little Theater, one of two remaining wooden buildings on the Hill.

The blaze was discovered during a Powder & Wig play rehearsal, and it raged on as firemen from four local departments searched in the dark for the hydrant (foolishly painted dark green so as not to offend the landscape). The fire started in an attached shed, housing a 1966 Ford station wagon belonging to the Air Force ROTC.[42]

Through the winter American forces reached a war-high peak of 350,000. Casualties and war resistance mounted at the same time. In April, a new English instructor, David Stratman, encouraged the formation of a Colby chapter of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), a national counterculture organization formed ten years before. Its manifesto, written mostly by the University of Michigan student newspaper editor, Tom Hayden, called for a fully participatory democracy, and initially focused on the fight for civil rights and the battle for free speech. By 1966 it had become more radical, mounting antiwar demonstrations on nearly one hundred campuses across the country. The Weather Underground, a SDS splinter group, was formed that year, preaching the violent overthrow of the government. The Colby SDS chapter did not flourish. While its leaders were often at the center of local demonstrations, the events themselves were not centered on SDS.

When their offspring acted up, many parents kept their own counsel, but there were others who were unafraid to move into the fray and set things straight. In January 1969, some seventy-five black students took over the communications center at Brandeis, making "non-negotiable" demands, including that the university hire more black teachers. As the standoff entered the second day, the mother of one of the protestors came out of the crowd, walked through the front door into the building, and returned with her son in tow. At Colby, the president of the new SDS chapter appeared one day in the dean's office, slumped in a chair, and said he was going to quit his SDS post and needed some advice. He wanted to know how to break the news of his resignation to fellow radicals. He worried they would laugh when he said his mother made him do it.

42. The worst Colby tragedy of the year occurred in February 1969. Two students were examining a pistol in their room on the second floor of the Phi Delta Theta fraternity house when the gun accidentally fired. Across the room their roommate, sophomore Robert Crowell, was killed instantly. A grand jury ruled the death accidental.



In the fall of 1969, faculty joined students in a nationwide October 15 "Vietnam moratorium," aimed at compelling Nixon to end U.S. involvement in the war. Students from Colby, Thomas College, and Waterville High School held meetings on the Hill and in town, where some one thousand people attended an afternoon rally in Coburn Park. Students marched from the Hill, carrying a flag-draped simulated casket. Ken Eisen '73 and Joan Katz '70 read from the list of war dead. The moratorium was followed by yet another "march on Washington" a month later. Students and townspeople gathered in the chapel for a "sympathy vigil," sponsored by the Colby moratorium committee and local churches. Organizers were intent on protest until the war came to an end.

## REBELLION AND CON CON

*"The trouble with revolutions," Roland Thorwaldsen said, "is that you don't get enough sleep." Religion instructor and head resident of Louise Coburn Hall, "Thor" was right about a lot of things; Strider would soon make him College chaplain. The sleepless second half of the academic year 1968–69 began with a testimonial to the boundless creativity of the Jan Plan as students found faculty advisers for a project focused on unionizing the cafeteria workers. In February, a small demonstration was held at the bookstore to complain about the cost of books (the average price of a college textbook had risen to $9.86). Later that month, the student government submitted to Strider a list of nine proposals. It led to a minor rebellion and from there to a constitutional convention that gave students seats in the boardroom.*

None of the nine proposals had anything to do with war. Six were about College rules. They asked that dorms be permitted to govern themselves; that upper-class students be allowed to live and eat off campus if they wanted to; and that students living in town be free from campus authority. They addressed complaints of scholarship students who were prohibited from having cars on campus and required to maintain higher grade point averages than their nonscholarship counterparts. They called for the creation of a rules committee, with student membership to match the number of faculty and administrators. Finally, they insisted night security officers be given radios, that the switchboard remain open twenty-four-hours, and that the College provide clinics on birth control, drugs, and mental health.

The proposals came through as demands and with the assertion that previous attempts to effect changes through the usual channels had been "futile." Strider was not inclined to deal with demands. Neither did he think recent

initiatives for change had been futile. He said Colby prided itself on rational process and respect for orderliness—"a tradition and spirit to which the peremptory tone of your letter is alien"—and took his time in responding. Days later he sent word the proposals would be parceled out to special committees and warned he would reject and resubmit any recommendations the committee reached "without adequate discussion, with significant dissent, or with a significantly narrow quorum." It was the procedural caveats that caused the trouble.

Student Government seemed willing to talk, but glaring in from the outside were students who felt the administration was slow and unresponsive and that Stu-G was incapable of speeding things up. They formed "the Chapel group," a shifting small crowd of dissidents that wrote its own proposals and planned a vigil in the chapel to force their adoption.[43]

On March 12, some three hundred students attended an early evening meeting of Student Government in Given Auditorium where Stu-G president Thompson urged students to attend the upcoming committee meetings and work on the original proposals. John Sobel '70 spoke for the dissidents, and announced the unveiling of the new proposals at a mass "celebration for a new Colby" later that night. When the Stu-G meeting ended, about fifty students walked across campus to Lovejoy Auditorium, hoping to attend the faculty meeting. After two inconclusive voice votes, on a show of hands the faculty voted not to let them in. In the midst of it, a dog wandered through the auditorium and a professor remarked loudly that apparently a student had gotten in anyway. Behind closed doors, the faculty endorsed Strider's handling of the nine proposals, but an attempt to introduce the newest proposals for debate was summarily declared out of order.

43. The Chapel group had plenty of examples of the effectiveness of building sit-ins. By that time there had been building occupations at more than a dozen campuses elsewhere. They began at Columbia University the year before, when several buildings were taken over in separate protests, resulting in the rejection of ROTC and the end of construction of a disputed gymnasium. At the University of California at Berkeley, a fifty-day student strike on behalf of minority studies resulted in the occupation of campus land that was turned into a "peoples' park." Students at the University of Chicago held an unsuccessful sit-in demanding the reinstatement of a radical sociology professor who had been fired. The National Guard was called to squelch a ten-day demonstration for an Afro-American studies department at the University of Wisconsin, and at Swarthmore a ten-day sit-in at the administration building resulted in an agreement to increase the enrollment of black students. In the midst of it, Swarthmore's president and Strider's friend, Courtney Smith, suffered a fatal heart attack in his office.



Some faculty members carried the news of the faculty meeting—including the unfortunate aside comparing students to dogs—to a late-night student meeting in Roberts Union where the angry pot boiled. At midnight, more than one hundred students took over the chapel, lit candles, and danced for the "new Colby." The next morning other students awoke to find copies of the "new Colby" proposals slid under their doors, the chapel under siege, and a letter from Strider in their mailboxes, inviting them to sign up for service on the committees that would work on the original nine proposals. Again, the president reiterated his right to veto any committee recommendations, and again the bottom line did not sit well.

That afternoon, chapel occupiers sent a delegation to the president's house, inviting him to meet that night with a few dozen students and clear things up. He agreed. When he arrived shortly after 10 P.M., more than six hundred howling students were jammed in the sanctuary, throbbing to the music of the Motor City Five. It was an ambush. Strider stood on the steps in front of the altar and began by addressing the battle cry for a new Colby. "The College," he said, "is renewed every year." Someone in the balcony yelled "bullshit." Strider said he wasn't interested in having a conversation at that level. Someone on the main floor apologized.

They were not all revolutionaries. The place was divided between those who supported the more deliberate committee approach and did not much care for the dissidents, and the noisier protestors, bent on rebellion. When Thompson pressed the president on whether he would in fact reject any committee recommendation on procedural grounds, Strider stuck to his guns and went on to explain the roles of president and trustees. Students began to walk out. Thompson said he felt betrayed, and resigned as Stu-G president. Two student leaders of the new committees quit on the spot as well. Dismayed, Strider left by the side door and walked to his car.

The confrontation left him deeply hurt. After that night, to the end of his presidency, he was never the same, often keeping the door to his office closed, and avoiding unscripted meetings with students. (In times of trouble, a plain-clothes local policeman sat in the parking lot of the administration building, watching the windows of the president's office. A drawn shade meant trouble, to come at once.)

The chapel vigil continued for sixteen days, with occupiers ebbing and flowing, all the while conducting negotiations between hard- and soft-liners and having an occasional party in between. Elsewhere, the new committees worked to churn out recommendations on the proposals. Some of them—a twenty-four-hour switchboard and radios for the campus watchmen—were

easy, but other issues dragged on through the spring. With the exception of the proposal that students be allowed to live off campus willy-nilly, all of the others, in one form or another, were eventually adopted.

Spring recess came, and the vigil-keepers abandoned the chapel and headed down the hill. When they left, the dean's office collected their belongings, and Dean Rosenthal wrote them letters, explaining their possessions could be retrieved at the buildings and grounds office. "We have decided," he said, "it is time for the Colby College chapel to be restored to its proper functions." Rosenthal offered to set aside a lounge if they wanted to continue discussions after vacation, but there were no takers. When they returned, there were better things to do. In April it was time to defend faculty members whose contracts were not being renewed. (To some students, the short list seemed lopsided with faculty dissidents.) In May, the 1969 yearbook came out, replete with counterculture art and precious little else. As students headed off to the summer of a moon landing and Woodstock, some 150 seniors stopped long enough to build a bonfire on the front steps of the library and, in a smoky protest against the protestors, burned their *Oracles*. It was that kind of year.

Trustees watched the smoldering from afar; and as the ad hoc committees struggled with the various proposals, the board assembled a few administrators, faculty, and students for a rump meeting in Boston, where trustee Eugene Struckhoff '44 suggested mounting a communitywide constitutional convention. Jetté and Strider agreed. The convention's purpose would be "to scrutinize the existing organizational structure and its inter-relationships, with a view toward possible restructuring of the divisions of authority, representation in the decision-making process, and the process of decision-making itself." Jan Hogendorn (economics) and Jeff Silverstein '70 worked through the summer to make arrangements.

There were many skeptics, on campus and off, who saw the convention as simply a device to head off further troubles. Avoiding more trouble was reason enough, but the convention was by no means a sop. Strider and others were hopeful the fractured lines of communication could be improved. Acknowledging "a minority of dissident students and some faculty whose purpose may not be entirely constructive," Strider said that, nonetheless, "the best protection is the establishment of a realistic governmental structure."

The planned convention roused many faculty members who were again bitter at not being consulted. At a special faculty meeting in mid-September they rose up against what one of them called the board's "arbitrary use of power." They were also jittery about possible tinkering with their authority in



matters of academic policy. After the fuming, at their regular meeting in September, the faculty passed a resolution giving an after-the-fact blessing to what was by then called Con Con, and followed it with a second resolution making it clear all recommendations would have to be approved by both the Faculty Meeting and the student body before being passed along to trustees. With that settled, the six constituencies of the College set about to choose 108 convention delegates who were assembled in Averill Auditorium on Friday, October 3. They chose the new professor of human development, Leonard Mayo '22, one of only a few on the broad scene who enjoyed full confidence and respect across all constituencies, as chairman. More than once over the next three days, his wisdom and unfailing good humor kept the proceedings from falling apart. Strider greeted the delegates and promptly checked himself into nearby Thayer Hospital, suffering a physical ailment his doctor said (to no one's great surprise) was brought about by stress. Silverstein ferried bulletins and messages to him.

Early on, delegates dismissed the idea of creating a faculty-student senate, a governing mechanism gaining favor on campuses elsewhere. A proposal introduced by Professors Koonce, Mavrinac, and Koons titled "Principles of Governance and Accountability" occupied much of the discussion, and semblances of it found their way into the final report. The train nearly went off the track at the very end when students moved a "corporate override" resolution that would have given final authority in nonacademic matters to an all-campus referendum. At the brink of collapse, the motion was withdrawn. After two days of debate and faced with the hopelessness of finding word-for-word agreement on final recommendations, the several issues on which there was general consensus were sent to an overnight drafting committee. On Sunday, October 5, with only a smattering of dissenting votes, the convention approved a sketch of the final report that got brushed up over the next month and given a final blessing when Con Con reconvened in November.

When the dust had settled, the clear headline among the many approved recommendations was that students could elect two of their own to the board of trustees. The faculty had been given two nonvoting seats in 1955, and the convention asked for voting privileges for both faculty and the new student members. Ultimately, the board agreed to seat two students, but neither faculty nor students were given votes. At the same time, students, like faculty, would have seats and votes on most committees of the board

Faculty-student tensions that had become full-blown during the spring contretemps were addressed with the agreement that Stu-G would send the seven members to the faculty meeting without vote, and in turn, the faculty

would choose two of its members to attend meetings of Student Government. (The faculty did not press for more seats. It would be hard enough to dragoon *two* members to attend Stu-G meetings, which often exceeded the Faculty Meeting in the matter of rambling.) In addition, students would have voting seats on the standing College committees, including a new committee on student affairs. Where sensitive personal student matters were discussed (e.g., financial aid, academic standing, and later, admissions) student members could participate and vote on policy matters but would be excluded from the discussion of individual cases. Thereafter, both students and faculty would approve changes in the committee system and the two bodies would share committee minutes.

Although it would provide a long-continuing source of debate and controversy, it was also agreed students could participate in academic department planning and in the evaluation of courses and instruction. To catch what was left, the convention created the short-lived position of College ombudsman, who was supposed to resolve nonjudicial complaints; and a faculty-student conference and review board, designed to give oversight to administrative policies. In December, both the faculty meeting and a student referendum voted by a two-to-one margin to send the recommendations on to the board where, in January, they were adopted.[44]

Strider was heartened by the friendly spirit of the convention, and said he could not have been more pleased with the outcome. Ben Kravitz '70, Stu-G president and a convention leader, said Con Con had brought "significant changes" and was not, as some had feared, an act of mere "tokenism." For a blissful moment that winter, the campus greeted the new decade with a note of harmony. By spring, however, the music had again gotten badly out of tune.

44. Colby was not alone in heeding student demands for a greater voice in campus decision-making. That same year, Harvard formed a committee on governance analogous to Con Con, and students joined committees and governing boards at other colleges, including Stanford, Wesleyan, and Oberlin. At Yale, president Kingman Brewster said he was not convinced that more representation was the key to university improvement; he warned, "If it is carried too far it could lead to disaster."



# 4. THE 1970S

## BACK TO THE CHAPEL

*The baby boomers became the Now Generation, a loose tag for an age that defied description. College students were divided among themselves, not just over politics and views of the war, but also over matters of lifestyle and values. If they had a unifying label, it was only because they shared an impatience with the world they were poised to inherit, and a frustration with "the establishment" that, from top to bottom, was painfully slow in making things right. By 1970 a growing college counterculture was engaging power centers in fierce debate, building fires against them, and often taking matters into their own hands. The dominant focus of conflict was the escalating war in Vietnam, but prominently on the edges were other issues begging for settlement as well. The long assault on the nation's environment had taken a frightening toll, and the young were determined to reverse the destruction. The new status of women lacked definition and acceptance, and a growing feminist movement was making the old order uncomfortable. And there was the enduring struggle for minority rights, with the nation's students again marching at the front, pulling and tugging others to follow. Colby students were engaged along all of the revolutionary fronts, and the noise was sometimes deafening. In early March, before the winter snow had melted, eighteen of the College's tiny black population found a way to be heard above the din.*

On Monday evening, March 2, President Strider drove to Bangor to appear on a WABI television interview program on student protests. It was a topic on which he was reluctantly becoming something of an expert. Later that night he returned to Waterville to find student dean Jonas Rosenthal on the front steps of the president's house with news that a group calling itself the Student Organization for Black Unity (SOBU) had gone into Lorimer Chapel, tying

the doors shut behind them. The protestors—ten men and eight women—issued a two-page mimeographed statement reciting five "demands" that they said must be met before they would come out.

After the chapel occupation of the previous spring, officials from Strider on down resolved to put down future illegal disruptions with dispatch. Moreover, Strider's position on dealing with "demands" from any quarter was well known. He would have none of it. Proposals for change must be dealt with through the committee process, established by the recent constitutional convention. But advance crisis planning had not anticipated the current dilemma. Even the appearance of heavy-handedness in dealing with SOBU, representing most of the College's twenty-five black students, was bound to smack of racism. For the moment, there was little to do but talk.[1]

The SOBU demands called for one hundred enrolled minority students by the fall, and a 10 percent black enrollment in freshman classes going forward; a special orientation program (sub-freshman week) for new black students; a black studies program taught by a black professor; and the elimination of the C+ grade point average (GPA) standard for receiving financial aid. All five issues were already under discussion in various committees, but in the short campus lives of students the committee process always seems to drag, and in the case of the Chapel 18, the dragging had gone on too long.

Colby began its concentrated minority recruiting efforts in 1965. Two years later twenty-three minority students, including thirteen black students, were enrolled. This year (1969–70) there were forty-two minorities, twenty of them black. Admissions dean Harry Carroll and his staff had already recruited seventy-eight black applicants, the largest number ever, for the class set to enter that fall. Even so, it was evident that the actual count of final enrollees would be a far cry from one hundred, and from the chapel SOBU revised its demand down to fifty. The future target of 10 percent minority enrollment was ambitious but not out of line with the College's own aspirations, and the Student Affairs Committee was even then mulling over the idea of a preorientation program for minority students.

The demand to eliminate the GPA guidelines for receiving financial aid fed two unfortunate stereotypes: that black students were less well prepared than their white counterparts, and that all minority students were in need of financial aid. Neither was true. Further, the demand annoyed many, on and off campus, who complained that the chapel occupiers were squandering their financial aid, even though they were no different from white classmates who were regularly skipping classes to protest. The Academic Affairs Committee had recently addressed the controversial financial aid rule and, with the concurrence of the faculty and trustees, upheld the C+ standard, but allowed for exceptions. Exceptions were routinely being granted in cases where students, black and white, were making demonstrable efforts to achieve. (Registrar Coleman said if there was any discrimination at all, it was only against "the motivationally disadvantaged.")

The demand for a black studies program with a black professor reflected the rarely stated but deeply felt frustrations of being black at an almost-all-white college. There were no ranking black faculty members.[2] During his temporary appointment, Jack Foner had made small inroads in developing black studies—the catalogue listed two courses in Afro-American history—and he had agreed to stay on and continue the work. A five-course black studies program was set to begin that fall.

The general climate that spring was bleak for black college students across the country. The assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy had left them disheartened, and the war had shoved civil rights activism into a distant second place. President Richard Nixon was pressing private employers to hire minorities, but his "southern strategy" catered to whites by slowing school desegregation. Court-ordered busing was still a year away. At Colby, black students faced even greater challenges. Although they were generally well accepted on the campus, it was always less comfortable in the all-white environs of town, and they avoided Waterville streets and businesses. Shops did not offer many of the products they were accustomed to; local barbers and hairdressers did not know how to serve them. Most local children had never met a black person, and they stared. On the campus, even in classrooms, blacks were often asked to express the black view on various issues, as if there were single views and as if they knew them. While at first they were patient and willing to explain, they quickly grew weary of the silly questions,

1. The Ethiopian track star Sebsibe Mamo '70 was one of the Chapel 18. Otherwise, the small number of black Africans eschewed the protest. They came from entirely different cultures, where they were among the majority (and where dissent was often not tolerated), and many of them did not understand what the fuss was all about.

2. The first black faculty member was Gladys Forde, who taught English from 1960 to 1962. Marie-Ange Cassol was an instructor in modern languages in 1970–71; Marion Brown was a visiting professor of music in fall term 1973; and Kenneth McClane, a Cornell graduate student, taught English in 1974–75. Wayne Brown (De Ponton D'Amécourt) '73 worked as an assistant in admissions for more than a year following his midyear graduation.

even from well-intentioned classmates. They griped that they had come to *get* an education, not to give one.[3]

The leader of the Chapel 18 was Charles Terrell '70, a history major. Strident and outspoken, he was also articulate and unfailingly polite. He met well with students and faculty across the campus and now with a rising tide of reporters who began to call the chapel telephone for interviews. On Tuesday, with the occupation one day old, Strider sent a warning that the students were illegally trespassing. Terrell and the others replied, "The matter of illegal trespass is pitifully irrelevant when compared to the matter of man's illegal trespass against human dignity." They would not move. Instead, they called for the support of a general class boycott the following day. It fizzled and a spokesman from the chapel called the inaction "essentially racist."

Many empathized with the black students and agreed with their demands. The *Echo* said the demands were reasonable and that rather than "violating the treasured channels of Con Con," the protest merely "dramatized the need for rapid action on black problems." White students smuggled food into the chapel and the owner of a local restaurant (taking pains to remain anonymous) sent in hamburgers and milkshakes. On the afternoon of the failed class boycott, some 350 people gathered to show support at a rally on the slushy lawns in front of the Chapel. With soul music blaring from loudspeakers in the tower, students carried signs and cheered as several demonstrators spoke from the front porch. That night, after a heated four-hour discussion, Student Government passed a resolution embracing the sit-in and calling for the administration to reevaluate its priorities. It allocated one hundred dollars to cover the cost of campuswide circulation of the messages from SOBU, and Stu-G President Kravitz rented the occupiers a film, *The Battle of Algiers.* Kravitz, who worked to negotiate a peaceful end to the protest, was a leader in establishing a "disadvantaged fund," later called "Project Open Door," which quickly raised $13,560 in gifts and pledges for minority student scholarship funds.

At the same time, others were suggesting that the administration cut off the chapel phones, barricade the building, and "starve them out." Many students signed a letter to Strider saying they did not agree with the Stu-G resolution.

General reaction off the campus was harshly critical of the sit-in. The public had little enough patience with any student protests, much less with the current uprising. The *Sentinel* accurately observed there was "more sympathy for and understanding of their (the protestors') frustrations among the people they are fighting than among the public at large." Although a bluntly racist letter to the *Sentinel* editor drew a flurry of scolding replies, much of the local grumbling had uncomfortable racial overtones. Not all of the criticism was pointed at the protestors. The *Portland Sunday Telegram* saved its strongest rebuke for the College leadership, declaring "If the administration surrenders to this nonsensical revolt, then it won't be able to complain at whatever demands, from whites or Negroes, are made in the future. . . . All over the country colleges are in trouble, but those most troubled are institutions whose officials abdicate their responsibility." So too, many alumni were seething.

On Wednesday, as angry letters and phone calls piled up, Strider called protest leaders to a morning conference in his office. By noon the negotiators moved to the chapel, where nobody blinked. The sit-in continued. Throughout the week the only disruption of the building schedule was the College-run basement nursery school for children of employees. A handful of mothers who showed up with their tots on the first morning of the occupation were politely turned away. As the weekend approached, Chaplain Thorwaldsen announced that his usual Protestant service, Father Leopold Nicknair's Catholic Mass, and Rabbi Phillip Goodman's Friday Jewish Sabbath observance would be combined in a single Sunday service in Given Auditorium. While worshipers prayed for the swift reclamation of the chapel, Strider again drew the weapon with which he was most comfortable. He wrote and distributed a six-page document detailing the College's minority recruiting efforts and its position on each of the demands.

On Monday morning, March 10, local attorney Robert A. Marden, a trustee and legal counsel for the College, led a small delegation of senior administrators to the Chapel door and delivered a message from Strider. Protestors had until 12:30 P.M. to vacate the building or face legal action. At 12:15, Terrell gave their reply: "We will not get out until we are taken out."

In the seat of authority and elsewhere, time and patience had run out. Marden had already set the wheels in motion for a temporary restraining order, and in Augusta Superior Court Justice James L. Reid quickly agreed, saying he had "adequate reason to believe a riot of serious proportions might result" if the building occupation was allowed to continue. He was wrong about that, but the College had the clout it needed to end the stalemate. The order, addressed to the students by individual name, gave them until 10:30 P.M. to leave or be held in contempt of court. It fell to acting Kennebec County Sheriff

3. Black students at Bowdoin and Bates had similar complaints. The Colby blacks were in close touch with their fellow students at Bowdoin where confrontation was avoided when President Roger Howell met with black students and agreed to a demand for thirty minority students in the upcoming freshman class. It was a goal Bowdoin could not meet. Bates, the Maine leader in minority enrollment, had twenty black students.

Horace Drummond to deliver the order, and with visible trepidation, he took it to the side door of the chapel shortly after 6 P.M. Rosenthal was with him. Some three hundred students gawked from the nearby lawn, and several state troopers waited in Lovejoy Hall. Terrell greeted the frightened sheriff politely, shook his hand, thanked him, and evaporated into the building, locking the door behind him. The crowd, expecting a confrontation that never came, slowly drifted away. By 9:30 only a few onlookers were left when the side door of the chapel opened again and the students emerged silently and in single file, tossed their sleeping bags and other belongings into a nearby station wagon, and dispersed across the campus. The seven-day occupation was over.

Strider knew the last resort use of law would not sit well with the protestors or their sympathizers, and he quickly issued a statement saying the decision to seek a court order had been difficult: "The ultimate objectives of the students in many ways were resonant with College policies and goals," he said. "But the decision became inevitable as it appeared more and more likely the occupation of the chapel, with its attendant dangers, could be ended in no other way. The task of the College now is to press rapidly for appropriate action in the areas that reflect these concerns." He took the moment to clearly warn against any future building occupations. Any such actions, he said, "will bring legal action as quickly as it can be arranged, whether the objectives—immediate or ultimate—are noble or otherwise."

The following day, SOBU issued its own statement, decrying the use of the courts. That afternoon Strider met with the black students in his office. He said he understood their resentment and explained the choice of seeking a restraining order, which carried civil penalties, was "vastly preferable" to seeking a warrant for criminal trespass. He reiterated that procedures established by Con Con must be followed and pledged that he would "encourage discussions and do my best to expedite them" and work to "eliminate the divisiveness" of the past week. As the meeting wore on, some two hundred SOBU sympathizers milled in the hallways of the three-floor building and 150 more picketed at the President's House. For an hour or so it looked as though Strider's freshly issued promise of swift legal action against protestors was going to be tested. Deans and others stepped gingerly among the bodies and backpacks, reminding students of the new edict, and when the offices closed at 5 P.M., the students quietly walked out.

The president was caught squarely between those who felt he had been hasty in calling in the cops and others who wished he had allowed the peaceful occupation to drift on. Both the *Echo* and Student Government railed against the legal action. The management of WABI-TV, which earlier in the



month had called Strider to comment as an expert on student protests, now scolded him for coddling the protestors, saying he "reacted badly" in the crisis by not moving quickly enough to put it down.

> On March 21, as various committees began working on minority issues with renewed vigor, the junior class sponsored a lecture by Muhammad Ali. The gymnasium was overfilled, and those turned away lined the walkways outside and listened over loudspeakers. Ali, stripped of his heavyweight boxing title and free on bail after being convicted of draft evasion, did not expound on the recent local crisis. Instead, he preached against racially mixed marriage: "No white person in his right mind and no black person in his black right mind wants integration to the extent of intermarriage," he said. "Every man wants a son who looks just like him. You folks don't even know yet what people on other planets look like," he scolded, "but you've already decided that Miss Universe is going to be white."

Later that month the executive committee of the board met in special session at the Union Club in Boston, endorsed Strider's handling of the crisis, and directed a new trustee committee on equal opportunity and the relevant College committees to address the issues raised by SOBU and report to the board in June. On the campus, Dean Johnson implored the faculty to allow the protestors to make up their missed classes and called a special faculty meeting where, after nearly four hours of discussion, a resolution embracing the board's charge was adopted.[4] As students headed into the last weeks of classes before final exams, the mood on campus was sullen and tense. Although the end of the school year was only days away, the tumultuous spring of 1970 had only barely begun.

4. Colby accepted forty-five minority students for admission in the fall following the chapel occupation. Only three, two of them black students, enrolled. A sub-freshman orientation program began that fall, and under a new exchange program with predominantly black Saint Augustine's College (Raleigh, North Carolina) eight students from St. A's visited Colby for a week in March 1971. The ad hoc committee reported in June, calling for renewed minority recruiting efforts to create a "viable" black community within the College (estimated at fifty). For two academic years, 1972–74, the number reached sixty-six, including thirty-eight blacks, then declined again.

## STRIKE!

*As the war droned on and the death toll mounted, the antiwar movement began to collect converts hand over fist. By the spring of 1970, most Americans wanted out, no matter what. President Nixon wanted to end it too, but only if there could be "peace with honor" and the communists left first. The year before, barely a month after his inauguration, he ordered secret bombings of Vietcong and North Vietnamese sanctuaries in Cambodia. Taking the war to a neutral country was illegal, and the move broadened the war he had promised to end. Campuses roiled in protest. Ignoring the dissidents and emboldened by the "silent majority," on April 30 the president announced ground troops were being sent to protect the new pro-American Cambodian government. Student protests mushroomed. Nixon called them "bums." In one of hundreds of outbursts across the country, students at Kent State University in Ohio buried a copy of the U.S. Constitution, claiming Nixon had "murdered" it. In four days of upheaval, students pelted police cruisers with bottles and fires were set in the streets of Kent. On the campus, students cut fire hoses and an abandoned ROTC building was burned to the ground.*[5] *The governor sent the National Guard with orders to prevent any assembly. On Monday, May 4, some 1,500 demonstrators gathered on the campus commons. Guardsmen, armed with tear gas and loaded M-1 bayoneted rifles, dispersed them. When the commons were cleared, the guard fell back and watched as the most militant of the protestors jeered from a nearby parking lot. Many students thought the confrontation had ended and began walking back to classes. Suddenly, inexplicably, guardsmen turned and fired into the crowd. Within seconds, four students lay dead. A dozen more were wounded. The news brought instant revulsion across the country.*

Campus elections are held every spring, with the new government taking office in the fall. In 1970, Ben Kravitz relinquished the Stu-G presidency after the April voting. His role during the chapel occupation had taken a toll on his studies, and graduation was looming. His replacement came from the left. Stephen Orlov '71 was a new activist. The son of working-class parents, he came from mainstream America: played football as a freshman, joined Kappa Delta Rho fraternity, and made plans for summer training as an ROTC officer. His early Colby experience changed him. As a sophomore he read Alex Haley's *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. He took a seminar on pacifism from the philosopher Reuman, and a course on political change from a young China expert, Yun-Tong Pan. Years later he could still recall the "sheer excitement" of attending their classes. Before the summer came Orlov abandoned his ROTC plans and let his hair grow long. His election as Student Government president reflected the rapidly shifting political mood of the student body and made him an anomaly in the long line of otherwise conservative, buttoned-down presidents.

When Nixon announced the Cambodian incursion, the National Student Association (NSA) sent a letter calling for a student strike; it arrived in the Colby Stu-G office on the same day as the killings at Kent State. It urged mobilization of local and national support for three causes: to force the U.S. government to "end its systematic repression of political dissenters and release all prisoners, such as Bobby Seale and other members of the Black Panther Party"; to cease the expansion of the Vietnam War into Laos and Cambodia and "unilaterally and immediately withdraw all forces from Southeast Asia"; and to make universities "end their complicity with the US war machine by an immediate end to defense research, ROTC, counter-insurgency research and all other such programs."

That night some five hundred students jammed an emergency meeting of Stu-G and cheered at an agreement to call a "peaceful and nonviolent" shutdown. "It is not our intention at this time to strike *against* the college," it said; "this is a strike *by* the college." The resolve made no mention of saving Bobby Seale[6] or of an end to ROTC, but it did ask the student body and the faculty to approve a strike. The next morning Orlov telephoned student government heads of ten Maine colleges and the six campuses of the University of Maine, collecting endorsements of a telegram to Maine Senators Edmund Muskie and Margaret Chase Smith insisting they "return home and address yourself to the people whom you represent." The telegram left little room to wiggle. "Give the students of Maine the opportunity to confront you," it said. The meeting was set for Sunday afternoon, May 10, at Colby.

Orlov and two of his friends, *Echo* editor Robert Parry '71 and Kenneth Eisen '73, set out to engineer the command senatorial performance, forming the nucleus of a small band of radicals committed to nonviolent civil disobe-

5. In the first two weeks of May, more than two dozen ROTC buildings were burned nationwide.

6. Seale was a founder of the Black Panther Party, formed in 1966 to guard against police brutality in black communities. It quickly became militant. Seale was in jail in 1969, charged as one of the Chicago Eight with initiating the riots at the 1968 Democratic National Convention. The charges were later dropped and his subsequent trial for the murder of fellow Panther Alex Rackley ended in a hung jury.

dience and bent on hauling both the student body and the faculty into action.[7] At a noontime rally in front of the library the flag was lowered to half-staff in memory of the dead Kent State students. Four faculty members spoke. Reuman and Eugene Peters (philosophy) talked of a shared sense of sadness and frustration. George Elison (history) decried Nixon's description of the college dissenters. ("You have been called 'bums' by the highest authority in the land," he said, "and I suspect you feel it right down to your toes.") The radical David Stratman (English) said Colby itself was part of the problem, "owned and controlled by representatives of big business." Stratman was not widely popular, even among the dissidents, but as faculty head of SDS his participation was obligatory. He invoked the issue of ROTC, and called for its elimination.

After the rally more than three hundred students began a "march against death," carrying four mock coffins, one draped with the U.S. flag, into town. Police chief John MacIntyre had issued the parade permit and arranged for police cars to bracket the marching protestors.[8] The crowd gathered a number of local supporters as it wound its way down Mayflower Hill to Post Office Square, down Main Street to Silver Street, and back up Elm Street to the post office where someone lowered the U.S. flag. It was raised again when postal workers objected, and the marchers wandered away, leaving the coffins on the lawn.

Strider called a special faculty meeting for Wednesday night. Dean Johnson circulated the notice, explaining the need to discuss the position of the College "vis-a-vis what appears to be an escalation in violence and confrontation." There was certainly no violence, but even as faculty members plucked meeting notices from their Lovejoy Hall mailboxes, protestors were sitting in at the ROTC offices on the ground floor. The students knew better than to shut down a federal installation, and despite the milling protestors, Lt. Col. Don Harris and his three-member staff were left alone to do their work.

The student strike vote came at a mass gathering in Wadsworth Gymnasium that night. The margin was a whopping 1040 to 117.[9] Concurrently, at the faculty meeting in Lovejoy, a strike resolution introduced by Robert Pullen (economics)—a far cry from a radical—passed 71 to 21 with ten abstaining. Classes were canceled until Sunday night, when the faculty would meet again. A second, four-part motion introduced by Stratman called for the end of ROTC, and the secret ballot vote ended in a tie (50 to 50). By rule, Strider cast the deciding vote and the motion failed. A further resolution from Robert Jacobs (government) said the College should not punish the students occupying the ROTC offices. Strider said student discipline was none of the faculty's business, and the motion was defeated.

By Thursday, the campus radio station WMHB—still on 610 NHZ—was hooked into national strike headquarters at Brandeis University, broadcasting around the clock. Muskie wired Orlov accepting the Sunday invitation and commenting hopefully on the students' "determination to proceed with a positive dialogue aimed at developing a constructive course of action." Senator Smith dithered. As a lonely supporter of the Nixon administration, she knew it would not be a pleasant occasion, nor was Colby her favorite destination.

> Never mind that Colby's president was a liberal Democrat; Smith's annoyance with Colby had begun many years before. In 1943, three years after she was elected to fill her late husband's seat in the House of Representatives, Colby was the first college to award her an honorary degree. She had no earned college degree and, as was custom, she got the short-sleeved master's. Over time she collected a closet full of honorary degrees (ninety-five in all), and all but this one were doctorates. It stuck out like a sore thumb on her résumé, and her colleagues never failed to remind Colby of the slight. The College made it right in 1991. Four years before her death at age ninety-seven, Colby awarded her a doctor of laws.

A series of strike events began Friday with a memorial service for the students at Kent State. Much energy went into the hasty development of a "counter curriculum" of workshops, led by faculty and others, on an array of pressing topics including militarism, racism, feminism, the military-industrial

7. Orlov, Parry, and Eisen joined Washington, D.C., antiwar demonstrations that summer and the next. The three were among some 1,500 arrested outside the Justice Department in Washington, D.C., during the 1971 May Day demonstrations aimed at shutting down the government. Throughout the capital, some 13,000 were arrested in four days of angry protests.

8. MacIntyre had some experience with college protestors in town. A month before, on April 15, a dozen or more students had peacefully picketed the Internal Revenue Office on College Avenue, opposing the use of tax money to finance the war.

9. Students' strike votes passed by slimmer margins at Bowdoin and Bates. Bowdoin's youthful president, Roger Howell Jr., spoke at a prevote rally and urged the college to "put pressure on President Nixon so that he knows the sentiments of the country." During a strike event at Bates, president Thomas Reynolds, who held a truck driver's license, got behind the wheel of a dump truck and led a clean-up caravan along the streets of Lewiston.

complex, and the cold war. Students flocked to support a blood drive; Tau Delta Phi held a benefit band concert; SDS presented *Salt of the Earth,* a film story of striking zinc miners in New Mexico; and Sunday Cinema showed *I Love You, Alice B. Toklas* (tickets 75¢, profits to support the strike).

On Friday night, with Strider and the deans sending strong signals they were about to send in the sheriff, protestors left the ROTC offices, still asserting the legitimacy of their action but claiming the threatened legal action "could only result in a loss of time." A second all-campus meeting that night provided an update on Sunday's rally, including news of Senator Smith's late acceptance. Strider spoke to the overflowing crowd in the gym and complimented strike leaders for "the constructive tone and high level of exchange of views." For the first time in public he revealed his view of the war. He called the recent expansion into Cambodia "depressing," and said the Nixon administration "has failed to take into account the deadening impact the war is having on young people and especially on college students." At the end, he could not resist sharing his anxiety about all those missed classes. He said he hoped the College could soon "get back to more orthodox forms of study."

Sunday, May 10, was a bright, spring day, and Colby was, for the moment, the center of Maine's antiwar universe. It was Orlov's twenty-first birthday and he had inadvertently arranged a whopping party. By early afternoon the central mall—from the Eustis Building to the science buildings and from the library to Mayflower Hill Drive—teemed with some three thousand people, most of them students. From a distance the scene resembled a county fair. Up close the mood was somber.

At 2:30, Muskie walked out the front doors of the library to a podium on the steps. The crowd cheered when Orlov introduced him.[10] Muskie was already touted as a Democratic presidential candidate for the 1972 election (he announced in December of that year), and his opposition to Nixon's conduct of the war was well known. He spoke from an eight-page text and used the friendly forum to announce his intention to introduce a Senate resolution requiring the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. forces from Cambodia. He said the purpose of the war had been to buy time for the people of Vietnam to build a country, and it was not worth it "if the price is the destruction of fundamental values and relationships in our own country."

Some of the crowd had drifted away before Smith appeared at four. She was tiny and frail, and her gray head could barely be seen above the podium. Orlov loomed over her like a giant bodyguard. She had no prepared speech and immediately invited questions. She would have fared better had she read something. Asked about Cambodia, she defended Nixon's decision, adding she was confident he would keep his promise to withdraw troops by June. Students howled. Someone asked if the nation's youth had been consulted in the making of the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. She said the question should be directed to former President Johnson. Asked to comment on the treatment of the Black Panthers, she said she didn't like the Black Panthers or the Minutemen. A black student responded: "I don't like you, or Nixon, or any of you, but I have to deal with you because you are the establishment."

The most stunning moment came when Smith was asked if there were American troops in Cambodia's neighbor country Laos. She turned to her aide, General William Lewis, and in a voice all could hear, repeated the question. He said no, and she turned back to the microphone and said she was not aware that there were any U.S. troops in Laos. Several in the crowd cursed, and some could be seen encouraging a young man as he made his way to the podium. He stood beside the senator, introduced himself as Brownie Carson, a Marine infantry platoon commander, and said he had recently been wounded in Laos. Turning to the senator, he asked how the ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee could not know that Americans were fighting in Laos, "and if you do know," he said, "how could you lie to us?" That was enough for Smith. As the screaming got louder, she turned abruptly and skulked back into the library, the dutiful general close behind.

Carson was a twenty-two-year-old Bowdoin graduate. Two years after chastising Smith on the Colby stage, he made an unsuccessful bid to unseat Maine Congressman Peter Kyros (1967–75) in the Democratic primary. He became one of the state's leading environmentalists and executive director of the Natural Resources Council of Maine. On the day of the Colby strike rally, another Bowdoin graduate, G. Calvin Mackenzie, twenty-five, was with the U.S. First Cavalry as it invaded Cambodia. Parts of the division had been in that neutral country months before, and Mackenzie and his comrades were irritated to learn politicians back home were saying it wasn't so. Mackenzie subscribed to the *Maine Times,* and a week later when he received the issue carrying the story of the Colby rally, he read the account of the confrontation with Senator Smith to members of his platoon. They cheered for Brownie Carson.

10. In January 1971, Orlov served as a student intern in Muskie's Washington office.

Mackenzie went on to earn a Harvard Ph.D. and joined the Colby faculty in 1978. He became a nationally recognized expert on the transition of power following U.S. presidential elections.

Aside from hurt feelings, little had gone wrong. Fears of confrontation and violence proved unfounded. The anti-antiwar people stayed away, and a cadre of some one hundred arm-banded volunteer student marshals kept order and cleaned up afterward. A "M*A*S*H" tent set up on the mall by the student health center (the sign said "Carl Nelson, Chief Cutter") had no customers. There were lots of beer cans smuggled in backpacks, and the smell of pot wafted in the spring air, but there were no arrests. An impending drug bust was narrowly averted when a local undercover cop, comically dressed as a hippie (bandanna, tie-dyed shirt, torn jeans, and sandals), was "outed" by a young Colby staff member who knew him and greeted him loudly as "sergeant." The officer glared in dismay, and the already popping pupils in the eyes of the pot smokers grew larger as they scurried into the milling crowd.

When all the visitors had gone, students gathered again in the gym and voted to continue the strike "to display our shock and disapproval of the further expansion of the war." The resolution asked the faculty to modify its requirements for term-ending papers and exams. From the beginning of the strike an ad hoc committee of faculty, administrators, and students had been puzzling over procedures for dealing with missed classes and, in particular, with how the Class of 1970 was going to meet its graduation requirements.

At a special meeting Sunday night, the faculty voted to resume classes the next day but left an odd escape for students who wanted to continue striking. A bare majority ruled they could simply stop going to class and take either a pass or fail grade, based upon their status in a course when the strike first began. They were given until Friday, May 15, to make up their minds. Strider seethed. Bad enough that course requirements were compromised, but he knew having students hanging around with little to do for the remainder of that angry spring was bound to be an administrative nightmare.

In fact, the worst was over. The final brush with disaster did not come until two weeks later. Early on Saturday morning, May 24, a night watchman investigating a broken window in the Lovejoy building discovered the unexploded remains of a Molotov cocktail inside the ROTC offices. A wine bottle filled with kerosene had been thrown through the window (it was a poorly made bomb; the contents ought to have been the customary oil and gas) and the



burned wick, apparently cut off as it passed through the glass, merely charred the sill. Fuel from the smashed bottle spread through the office but did not ignite. Still, it was a federal crime, and the FBI investigated. Six months later, with fingerprints taken from the reassembled bottle, George Cameron '68 was arrested, convicted, and sentenced to prison.[11]

The engagement of the FBI was pro forma, as the ROTC offices were federal property. At the same time Nixon was asking Congress for one thousand additional federal agents to investigate any kind of violence on campuses receiving federal aid. Following the spring protests, student activists around the country were pressing to interrupt academic calendars with "political recesses" to allow students to campaign for peace candidates in the fall midterm elections. At Colby and elsewhere faculties squelched the idea when the Internal Revenue Service warned that electioneering could risk loss of an institution's tax-exempt status. And in Congress, Democrats blocked a bill that would have increased federal support for higher education out of fear that it would be used as vehicle for amendments aimed at curbing campus violence.

Commencement finally came. The principal speaker was South Dakota Senator George McGovern, already the darling of the antiwar movement. His message resonated with many students who carried protest signs and eschewed traditional caps and gowns, donating the rental fees to war relief. McGovern, soon to be thrust upon the national scene as the ill-fated 1972 Democratic presidential candidate, called for "a second American revolution—not a revolution of violence, but a quiet determination to square the nation's policies and priorities with the ideals of our founding documents."

Steven Cline, class president, arranged war discussion events around the customary program, and Gregory Carbone, class speaker, spoke for many of his classmates when he admitted he felt "lost" as he viewed an American society where "dishonesty is sanctioned" and "lies are an accepted part of advertising, and politics is treated openly as the art of public deception." He said he despaired of finding ways to effect change.

Everyone was exhausted, none more than Strider who clung to an annoyance that academic standards had been compromised to accommodate a prolonged strike. On that score, he did not mince his words, and when he spoke at the baccalaureate service, he threw a bomb of his own: "This year, unhappily,

11. Thirty years later, in 2001, the felon sought a pardon for his crime. The process required the forgiveness of his victim: Colby. President William Adams, a Vietnam Army veteran, agreed.

even though it was occasioned for the most part by forces beyond the control of any of us, the Colby degree for some members of this class is not as good a degree as this board and this faculty have always wanted it to be." His scorn was pointed not so much at the students, but at the faculty who had let it happen. He agreed students were free to attend class or not, but faculty members were obliged to meet their contractual obligations. Some students, he said, "have received credit in courses in which the instructors have not lived up to the obligations they accepted when they agreed to be appointed." Whatever else the president said to the graduates that morning was soon forgotten, but his assertion that their degrees were sullied rang harshly in their ears for years to come.

## CEASEFIRE

*There were a few new faces on the upper floors of the administration building when the College opened in the fall of 1970, and in the faculty a handful of the more rebellious members had evaporated into the mists of academe. Strider was calling for a new look at what the College was to become and for brighter lines in defining how far it would go. While no one could imagine greater upheaval than that of the spring just past, tension lingered over the ongoing war in Vietnam. Strider called for a local ceasefire, but it would be another sixteen months before the final volley was fired.*

The exodus of leadership began at the top. Ellerton Jetté (who must have marveled at the differences between running a shirt company and a College under siege) stepped down as chairman of the board. Albert Palmer '30, a vice president of New England Telephone & Telegraph Company, succeeded him. Jetté and Strider had gotten along well; Palmer and Strider would not.

Parker Johnson, dean of faculty for a decade, returned to teaching. A beleaguered Jonas Rosenthal, who had trod the fine line between firmness and flexibility in dealing with the new breed of students, relinquished his dean's post and went back to the classroom as well. There wasn't time for a full search for either post, and Strider coaxed two of the most broadly respected faculty members to stand in. Mark Benbow (English) became dean of faculty; Albert Mavrinac (government), dean of students. Within a year, both jobs were filled. Paul Jenson, a psychologist like Johnson, vice president at Temple Buell College in Denver, became dean of faculty. Willard "Bill" Wyman '56, who knew something of student unrest from a tour as special assistant to the president at Stanford, returned as associate professor of English and dean of students.



Administrative vice president Roney Williams went on a year's leave and Robert Pullen '41, chair of economics, took his place. The move presaged Pullen's eventual permanent appointment in 1973 when, after a year as acting president during Strider's own sabbatical, Williams retired. Pullen was a veteran teacher. He earned his doctorate at MIT, where he taught for a time before joining the Colby faculty in 1945. Like his alumni predecessors, he was a fiscal conservative. Unlike either of them, he was liberal in his politics and longer on patience with an ever more demanding faculty.

Across the campus, the most prominent division was over ROTC, a favored target of antiwar protestors. Nationwide enrollment in the military training programs had plummeted even though college students were eligible for the draft. Many who might have enrolled as a means of finishing college were put off by peer pressure. At Colby, the number of new cadets fell into the teens. If the question had been left to students alone, ROTC would have been abandoned. In the heat of the spring of 1970, Student Government represented a majority opinion in voting for its abolition. In the midst of it, Jan Hogendorn (economics) squared off with the philosopher Reuman on the question, "Should Colby Discontinue ROTC?" Hogendorn took the negative, asserting that if the United States was to have an intelligent and sensible military, there ought to be some Colby officers alongside those from Texas A&M and the Citadel. The audience was clearly not on his side. Strider had used the same argument—"military officers ought to have read some poetry"—to convince a narrow majority of the faculty to retain the program. Under the rules of Con Con, the disagreement between the two bodies had to be settled by the newly constituted Conference and Review Board (CRB).

The CRB recommendation was to go to the trustee Educational Policy Committee on the way to the full board; as it waited for the CRB to report, the EPC met in Boston to have its own discussion. One question was going to be whether credit for ROTC courses should be counted in the number required for a student's graduation (reduced from 120 to 105 hours two years before). Pat Brancaccio (English) argued against the Strider-Hogendorn position, questioning whether the ROTC courses were truly free of distortion and asserting that the instruction might not be liberalizing the military at all. Tony Maramarco '71 (who within a few years returned as Strider's administrative assistant) said the military courses did not fit the College's overall academic program at all. Anne O'Hanian '72 (later a trustee) said removing the credit would merely "condemn ROTC to a slow death."

The CRB, with Paul Perez (psychology) and Charles Hogan '73 as cochairs, took its time, and at its fourth marathon meeting in December, agreed to rec-

ommend that ROTC courses become an extracurricular activity with academic rank withdrawn from ROTC personnel.[12] The EPC signed on and the board approved in April 1971. That fall Bill Rouhana '72 (also later a trustee) resurrected the ROTC issue before Student Government, arguing that students should have the option of choosing ROTC in order to complete college before being drafted. Stu-G agreed and reversed its 1970 vote.[13] For those who opposed the training program on moral grounds, the new Stu-G support was irrelevant. By 1971, Nixon was bringing home ground troops and at the same time stepping up the air war in hopes of forcing a peace. In protest of the increased bombings, Hanoi negotiators walked out of peace talks in Paris and prepared for an invasion of the south. The National Student Association again summoned the campuses to action.[14]

After lunch on Friday, April 21, 1972, more than a dozen students marched into the ROTC offices (relocated the year before from Lovejoy to Averill Hall) and said they would not leave "until ROTC is evicted from Colby or until we are arrested." A protestor told a crowd gathered outside that the office was a "center of death," prolonging the war by producing fliers who "commit murder" from the sky. Wyman, fresh in his post as dean, was decidedly against the war, and he sympathized with the determined students.[15] With Strider, he led a parade of officials who visited the protestors, reminding them of the consequences of civil disobedience and breaking the law. They wouldn't budge.

The next move was the dean's, and it was not made, as most had expected, in the civil jurisdiction. Instead, Wyman gave the students until 5 P.M. to vacate the premises or face charges before the Student Judicial Board. They did not leave, and later that evening Chief Justice Swift Tarbell '72 convened the

12. In fact federal law required that the assigned instructors be accorded faculty rank in aerospace studies.

13. The softening view of Student Government was made further evident that year when it overwhelmingly rejected a proposal to reorganize a local chapter of SDS. The Stu-G president was by then again a moderate, William Mayaka '73. As a government minister in his native Kenya during the 1990s, Mayaka became the highest-ranking government official in the Colby alumni body.

14. No Maine colleges went on strike. Classes were made optional at Bowdoin, and at the University of Maine at Portland, Maine Representative William Hathaway (Dem.) refused to accept a petition signed by some three hundred students calling for the impeachment of President Nixon.

15. Wyman's father, Willard Sr., was a four-star army general and on D-Day in 1944 was the first general on the Normandy beaches. While attending his son's Colby graduation in 1956, he officiated at the annual spring commissioning of ROTC officers.



board that obligingly cited protestors for violating the civil rights of Harris and his two-man ROTC staff. In the hope that the students could be jawboned out of the offices over the weekend, the order gave them until 7 A.M. on Monday morning. If they weren't gone by then, they would be suspended. The order was ignored. Instead, protestors issued a statement calling for support. On Thursday more than three hundred filled the auditorium in Runnals Union, where representatives of Vietnam Veterans Against the War spoke and showed a film of war veterans discarding Vietnam medals at a Washington protest. Stu-G met on Saturday and voted 10 to 3 not to support the sit-in.

At seven on Monday morning Wyman delivered a notice to the seventeen students still in the offices. If they did not leave by 7:30 A.M. they would be suspended, at least until September 11, 1972. The number of protestors dwindled to ten, nine men and one woman. C. Patrick Lynch '74 had become their leader. He kept his promise of a "dignified and non-violent" protest, but it was evident that the holdouts wanted to assume a classic civil disobedience stance and be arrested. By this time the College was ready to oblige. At eight o'clock Wyman verbally issued the suspensions, and seven Waterville police officers, accompanied by Chief Ronald LaLiberte and Assistant Kennebec County Attorney Marden, entered the building and arrested the students for "refusal to vacate," a misdemeanor under Maine's new, untried "sit-in law." A small crowd of some 150 students and faculty watched as the students raised their fists on their short escorted walk to a nearby school bus.[16] At their booking in City Hall they discovered that sympathetic faculty members had already passed the hat and raised bail money of one hundred dollars for each. Later that day, in light of "the dignity and concern" with which the protest had been conducted, Wyman shortened the suspensions and gave the students a chance to finish the semester. He said they could come back on May 8.

The concession did not sit well off the campus. Waterville's colorful and outspoken mayor, Richard Carey, felt duped. He and others had quietly agreed that in return for the lengthier suspension the trespassing students would be cited for a misdemeanor rather than a felony (criminal trespass). Carey called Wyman's reprieve a "wrist-slap" and a "hoax," and said that next time the College could call Oakland. He said he would send the College a bill for three hundred dollars to cover the cost of supplying the officers.[17] The next day, as

16. While waiting for the cops, the protestors did some tidying up. Before the deadline, newspapers and sandwich wrappers were thrown out, and the office rugs were vacuumed.

17. Carey was, nevertheless, a vocal opponent of the war. Later that day he wrote a

College and city officials met to smooth the town-gown waters, some two hundred students milled throughout the Eustis administration building, protesting the war and complaining about the "double jeopardy" of the students who had been both arrested and suspended. In early May District Court Judge Roland Poulin fined each of the students one hundred dollars and sentenced them to ten days in the Kennebec County Jail. He suspended the jail sentence, but warned that it was "no joking matter" and that he would put them away for ninety days if they broke the law again.

It was the ceasefire Strider had long been looking for. The protests wound down, at Colby and elsewhere, not because the colleges had found a way to quiet the angriest students, but because the war was ending. Three months later, in August 1972, even as Nixon tried to force a peace with increased bombings, the last U.S. ground forces withdrew. The following January national security advisor Henry Kissinger proclaimed, "Peace is at hand," and the air bombing stopped as well. As the last U.S. troops left Saigon in 1975, the communists swept down from the north. Neither the Congress nor the country itself had the stomach to weigh in again and stop them. Saigon became Ho Chi Minh City and the long war ended almost where it had begun.

Colby ROTC enjoyed a brief resurgence after the 1972 sit-in, but the program was never again as large as it had been before the war. With only two seniors enrolled, fourteen freshmen signed on the fall of 1972, including the first three women cadets.[18] The following year, Thomas College made a joint venture with Colby and began a companion AFROTC program on its new (1971) West River Road campus. The struggle of Strider and others to keep the military training program at Colby was made moot in February 1974 when General F. M. Rogers, commander of the Air University in Alabama, wrote to say that the postwar zero draft had taken its toll, that the program at Colby could not be sustained, and that it would be discontinued after commencement. The general thanked Strider and Colby for the many fine officers the College had sent to the air force over the past quarter-century.

In 1987, a dozen years after the war, the populist *Boston Globe* columnist Mike Barnicle gave the commencement address and called for graduates to be on guard against politics and privilege. The politics of the Vietnam War were

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letter to Strider in which he said that while he had strong feelings about law and order, he was well aware "that a large majority of our citizens share the feelings of that small band of students." The bill for police costs was never sent.

18. Cathy Worcester of Lincoln, Maine; Joanna Pease of Lisbon, Portugal; and Carol Houde of Nashua, New Hampshire.



"obscene," he said, and privilege played its own role with the "fighting and dying being handled by kids whose fathers came out of firehouses or Local 114 or the MBTA" and whose mothers worked as "waitresses, if they worked at all." He said he had called the College to ask how many graduates died in the war, and was not surprised when he was told there were none. The answer was incomplete. Robert Lloyd '68, a Vietnam veteran, helped set the College straight. Four Colby men, three of them undergraduates, were killed in the war: Specialist David T. Barnes '68, Capt. James H. Shotwell '62, Lt. Leslie A. Dickinson Jr. '67, and Lt. Robert C. "Mike" Ransom Jr. '66.

Their names were inscribed on a tablet placed near the other war memorials on the central campus mall, and dedicated June 11, 1988. These fou made the supreme sacrifice, but there were many other students and g ates whose lives were unalterably changed because of their service. And c battlefields at home there were patriots of a different sort, often scorne despised, who never wanted to diminish the sacrifices of their brother sisters in arms, but who used the tools of a democracy—peaceful d and protest—to turn the heads of an entire nation toward believing tha war, despite the virtues of stemming communism, was not worth its c lost and ruined lives.

## QUIETER REVOLUTIONS

*The nation was more culturally divided and disillusioned than it had been since the Civil War. The young, emboldened by their own voices, rejected entrenched middle-class values and sought new lifestyles of their own. Their elders clung to an unrecoverable past and could not close the generation gap. As always, changes began on the campuses. Students no longer received their education as supplicants and were eager to shape the rules of how they lived and what they studied. Sometimes administrators went along for the ride; more often they fought to stay the old course, dodging potholes and applying the brakes wherever they could.*

Conflict and change was evident in Waterville as well. The new highway had divided the city into smaller parts and old neighborhoods were breaking down. Crime was on the rise. In the years Colby and Waterville had shared the same few acres, borders of the campus blended into neighborhood streets, and students were very much a part of town. Now, the old ties were stretched. Some were broken forever. Never was the long mile from the Post Office to the Hill more staggeringly apparent than in November 1971.

Katherine Murphy, a freshman, only eighteen, was reported missing by her