

Student Opinion Poll Favors Demonstrations

The week of April the eleventh, a survey poll was conducted in the Great Hall. The subject of the survey was Student Demonstrations, and the questions involved opinions on the aspects and merits of the student demonstrations occurring off many campuses today. The poll was taken the week following the Peace March from our campus to Fort Monmouth, Eatontown, and opinions were raging through the campus that week as to the merits and aspects of that particular march. With that in mind, the OUT-LOOK took the opportunity to get on paper some of the persuasions of sixty, randomly chosen M.C. students. They were advised that they need not answer all of the questions, which were assembled in a somewhat undesirable and limited multiple-choice questionnaire. However, the percentages listed are at least interesting and future polls taken will be both better constructed, will take in a larger range of opinions, and will hopefully be more than merely interesting; they will be indicative of the student body opinion.

The first question asked was "Do you feel student demonstrations are constructive?" Fifty-Eight point three per-cent answered, "Yes".

Five per-cent felt "they brought about modification or improvement of the problem."

Eight point three per-cent felt "they brought about a greater understanding of the problem".

Forty-five percent felt "they brought about an awareness of the problem."

An interesting note is that forty per-cent answered "No", they did not feel "they were constructive" at all.

Since the second question was ambiguous and the results somewhat unreliable. They were discarded.

The third question was "Would you take part in a student demonstration?"

Of the persons who answered, ten per-cent answered "yes, were it orderly although unpopular". Eight per-cent answered, "Yes, if it was popular although disorderly" while seventeen per-cent answered, "Yes, if it were popular and orderly." Five per cent polled, said they would demonstrate although the march was disorderly and proved unpopular; likewise, fourteen per cent answered an unqualified "Yes, if justified in their own minds". In total, fifty-four percent answered "Yes" and thirty-one per cent answered an unqualified "No".

The next set of 'related questions' proved the most interesting and revealing. Only eighty-six per cent of the people answered this question concerning their "Support of the right of students to express their opinions in demonstrations". Only three per-cent answered, "Yes, if I agree with them", and five per cent "No, if I disagree with them".

An overwhelming seventy-eight per cent supported the principle of free speech, without qualification.

However, the margin of support seemed to dwindle alarmingly when a specific issue was raised in which application of this principle was attempted. The question continued ". . . If their opinions run counter to your idea of American loyalty?" Fifty-eight per cent remained consistent in their support of the principle. twenty-eight per-cent now an-

swered an unqualified "No".

It is up to sociologists, anthropologists and persons trained in the understandings of cultures to interpret broad and deep surveys of social mores and directions. Certainly, this poll is perhaps hardly indicative of the attitudes of the students of this campus alone. Yet, it would indeed be an unpretty sight to witness, if persons of college age (and supposedly above-average achievement, awareness and goals) could misunderstand the very essence upon their forefathers placed such high regard that they included it in their declarations and Constitution, the freedom and right of each man to speak his beliefs.