

STANFORD UNIVERSITY NEWS SERVICE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
STANFORD —

"Terrorism tends to be the tactic taken by a protest movement that does not have a mass following," Stanford President Richard W. Lyman said early Monday afternoon, April 26, following the burning of a dormitory lounge Monday morning and the bombing of the President's Office building Friday.

President Lyman, who lunched with students at Junipero House following the burning of their lounge, called the fire there "atrocious." "I think student concern that a dormitory or buildings attached to a dormitory could become a target is going to make a substantial difference in the outlook on campus," he added.

The Santa Clara County fire marshal's office and campus firemen continued to sift through ashes of the fire Monday afternoon, trying to determine its precise cause. It remained labeled "of suspicious origin."

Commenting generally on recent incidents of campus violence, President Lyman said: "It's hard to say whether a single thing is behind all of the acts. . . . We are plainly currently a target for the kind of movement that has adopted numerous targets in the past year or two.

"The groups are, in one way or another aimed at upsetting the Establishment. They claim in one way or another to be seeking change for the benefit of 'the people.' But there's no evidence that there's any mass following behind these movements. In fact, quite the contrary. . . .

"There is and has been a small group advocating violent means and apparently persuading somebody to resort to them in existence in the Bay Area for some time. We seem to be the prime target this week. It can be somebody else next week. . . .

"It is very important to stress that it's not a case of any sizeable group of Stanford students rising up against what they perceive to be the state of things at Stanford. It just isn't that sort of thing any more, whatever it may have been a few years ago. . . .

"It seems very clear that the proportion of student involvement has been going down. . . . These latest events are the kinds of things that are perpetrated by one or two people, not a crowd at all for the most part.

"The pattern of arrests, not only here but also at Berkeley, would seem to indicate that nonstudents are preponderant in these movements."

Asked what security precautions the University might take, President Lyman said: "One quickly exhausts the number of new and different ways to try to protect the buildings of a far flung campus. You can increase the number of people involved, but you don't really invent brand new ways to go at it. We are having various meetings today to consider this latest episode and to see what, if any, new approaches we can take."

Junipero House residents, interviewed at random, expressed anger, frustration, and personal affront as they discussed Monday morning's fire. All assumed that the fire was set. Some typical reactions:

Nate McBride, freshman who discovered the fire: "This is far different from setting a truck or a motorcycle on fire. If one of us had not seen it, a lot of us would be dead. That's not vandalism; that's murder."

Richa Williams, freshman receiving minority aid: "When they keep burning down things, it is money out of my pocket. It makes no sense. I'm going to school under financial aid for minorities, and this just means less money for us. They talk about doing things for the people, but this doesn't help matters one bit. I'm for change, but not this way."

Hilary Rowen, freshman: "I don't feel particularly good about staying on here, even though there was no particular reason that I can see for anyone starting the fire. I think it was a random occurrence, so I'll stay on."

Dave Johnson, junior: "It looks like the fire was set, and if it was, I think it is terrible. I don't know how the University can crack down on this sort of thing. The students certainly are not in favor of this at all. I live on the first floor, and the firemen said that if the fire door had not stopped the fire, it would have gone down the corridor and possibly killed a lot of us. I'm not afraid about staying on here because I think Junipero was just chosen at random. But it was an awfully stupid act."

Jim Almas, junior: "I've lived here four weeks and we have had four fires. I guess we have to expect it because it's going on all over the country. I don't know why we were a particular target, but we can't let it get us shook."

Hal Michelson, outgoing member of the Council of Presidents is not a resident of the house, but he had this to say: "It is tragic that one or two persons can cause damage to the University and the campus. The really tragic part is that it takes only a few to perform such acts. The rest of us can be indignant and shocked, but we are powerless to do anything."