

Professor Schwartz misses excitement of 60s

"It seemed I always had to stop people from taking over buildings!" Schwartz said. "I grabbed a megaphone that was conveniently nearby and started yelling that we weren't here just to see one man, but to see the people of North Carolina and any violence would discredit us and our cause in their eyes."

"It must have worked, because suddenly people calmed down and began to play guitars and banjos and sing peace songs."

"In all modesty, I saved the day."

But even though there was no violence that day, Schwartz did not look like a hero, but a radical, to the viewers of the news on television that evening.

Well, the first sentence of my speech had to get the attention of these 10,000 people waiting for some profound statement. So my first words were "What is this goddamn war all about?"

And of his 20-minute speech, that was the line the T.V. stations chose to air on their programs.

"I came back to UNC feeling like I had done my duty and stopped a riot. You can imagine my surprise when the Dean called me to his office and told me people were calling him complaining that I was corrupting the morals of their children!"

Though he didn't apologize and he didn't get fired, Schwartz did learn something from the television coverage. "I think you can do anything in North Carolina except take the Lord's name in vain. Here I was, I had worked for McCarthy and fought for union

workers and black students with no feedback whatsoever. But with one word, I was a corrupting radical!"

But if another war like Vietnam occurred, Schwartz says not only would he lead another march to Raleigh, but he would tell his two sons not to serve in the Army. "I would tell them, in good conscience, that I would rather them go to prison or leave the country than fight in a conflict politicians can't explain to the public."

Joel Schwartz's involvement in

studying at Moscow University in 1964, Schwartz heard a knock on his door one March night at midnight. At the door stood a young man.

The man told Schwartz he had been a Jewish student at Moscow University who had gotten into trouble with the government. He had been placed in an insane asylum, but had escaped. The man now feared recapture and arrest.

"We stood in the outer corridor at my boarding house. The man tore pieces of

The Exchange Student Committee which had given Schwartz a grant to study in Russia had warned him to avoid Russian Jews. But the day the man appeared at his door, Schwartz had accepted an invitation from the Israeli Embassy to observe Passover there.

"The man could have been telling the truth, but I had no way of knowing. Besides, my wife and I thought it suspicious that he would come to me after I had received a private invitation to observe a Jewish holiday. We wondered how he found out we were Jewish."

The man returned twice more, the last time the night Schwartz was to attend the Passover service. "I was sitting at the table when the man suddenly appeared at our door. My wife jumped up and pushed him out of the room, locking the door. We never saw him again."

Schwartz said he believes this was a KGB agent trying to trap him as a conspirator because of the suspicious, persistent nature of his visits, along with the fact Schwartz had been a leader in Jewish Youth Groups.

Schwartz has won two Tanner Awards for Distinguished Teaching in six years, once in 1968 and again in 1974, but he doesn't feel the same peace of mind he got 21 years ago on an Israeli farm.

"I never can see evidence of what I do in teaching. All I am sure of is that I stand up and talk for a number of minutes. It's a job with a lot of built-in frustrations."

"I was to give this fire-and-brimstone speech on the lawn of the Governor's Mansion while a delegation of people picked from the protesters went in the mansion to give Scott a petition against his action and the war."

controversy didn't stop with anti-war protests. Outside of the U.S., he found himself almost involved with the communist government in Russia—not because of his politics, but because of his religion and not of his own desire, but of someone else's.

This involvement was what Schwartz believes was a KGB attempt to frame him as a member of the Jewish Resistance in the Soviet Union.

While a graduate exchange student

paper from the edge of a newspaper lying on a table and wrote his story on them in Russian. After I read aloud what he wrote, the man tore the slips up and flushed them down the toilet."

The man wanted Schwartz to take his story to the Western media so there would be wide-spread publicity if he was arrested.

"The situation with Jews in Russia is a tightrope," Schwartz said. "I told the young man I was sorry, but I couldn't help him."

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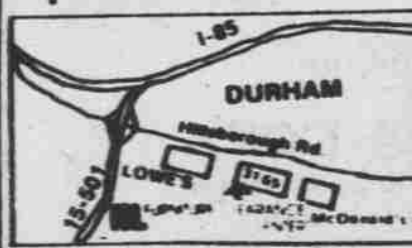
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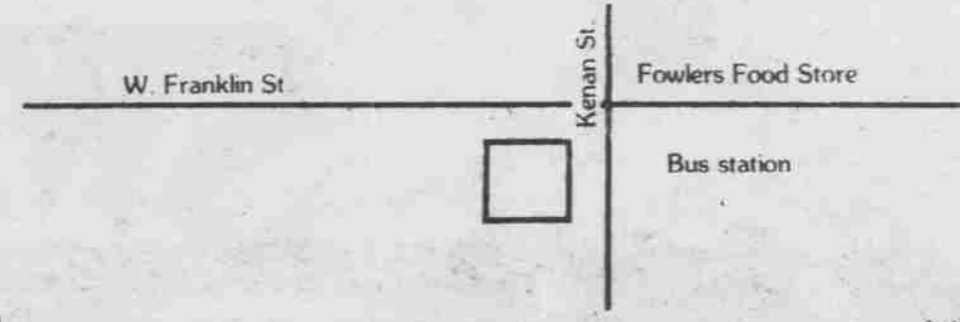
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