

12/15/06

UPDATE provided by I Resist!

They called it a "congressional field hearing" to examine Tim Johnson's and disgraced House Speaker Dennis Hastert's "Protection of University Governance Act of 2006" (HR 5289). It ended up being a stacked Republican attempt to shame the NCAA for pushing us closer to ending the use of a racist mascot at UIUC.

However, Bernard Franklin of the NCAA held his ground and received support from Professor Steven Kaufman and Democratic congressman Danny K Davis (IL). Not one American Indian was present as an official witness despite ample representation available at UIUC's Native American House and American Indian Studies program.

The hearing was heavily policed and no one was allowed entrance who openly wore t-shirts with anti-racism messages. Police at the entrance made people remove their shirts or turn them inside-out--while crowd members with mascot emblems and "chief" written on their shirts passed right through with open arms.

This attempt to silence dissent was reinforced by the Republican Chairman of the committee, Howard McKeon (CA), when he began the session by saying, "We will not have any response from the audience ... Please if you would just not respond to anything that is being said."