

Law Teachers Refute Olson Complaint

By DIANE SHERMAN
(Of The Capital Times Staff)

University of Wisconsin Law School professors, urging an investigation into alleged police misconduct at an anti-war demonstration two weeks ago, never claimed to have personal knowledge of the incident, a faculty member says.

Prof. William Whitford, one of 8 professors who asked United States Atty. John Olson to investigate the incident said in a telephone interview, "We never said that we had the information. We said that the information existed. It does — Mr. Olson has not denied it exists."

Olson had criticized the faculty request, saying that 23 of the 28 signers had not witnessed

the clash on the Federal Building steps May 10.

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Prof. Whitford has written a private letter to Olson, clarifying the faculty request. Whitford said that he was unwilling to release the contents of the letter to the press.

"It was never the intention of the faculty to embarrass Mr. Olson publicly," he said. "It was our intention to call his attention to what we felt was a very important need — an investigation of alleged police misconduct."

Whitford said that he did not wish to divert Olson's energies from the investigation into responding to public criticism,

adding that it was not the intent of the faculty "to litigate their disagreement with Mr. Olson in the press."

However, Whitford stated that while the faculty signers of the original letter made no claim to personal knowledge of the incident, ample evidence existed on which Olson could base an inquiry.

Olson could ask students who had witnessed the incident for statements, he said, noting that many students had already made statements to attorneys representing those arrested in the fracas.

In addition, a number of statements already exist on public file, as affidavits in the

civil action before U.S. District Judge James Doyle over alleged police harassment.

As another source of data, the U.S. attorney has access to police and news film, Whitford noted.

Whitford said that the faculty members were grateful that Olson had assured them that he would continue the investigation, and added that he hoped that Olson would make some sort of public report on completion of the study.