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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STANFORD - Today's radicals who believe destruction is the only way to save the world are ignoring history, and "the intellectual poverty of their arguments has been more than a match for the unimaginative arrogance of their subsequent behavior," says Stanford University Provost Richard W. Lyman and an historian himself.

Speaking Thursday night (APRIL 16) in Palo Alto to the School of Law's Board of Visitors, Lyman said that refusal of perpetrators of campus violence "to take the consequence" of their misdeeds is "a fundamental and tragic deterioration."

~~In taking this stand, "You (the revolutionaries) are indeed saying that the society and the institutions that would provide those consequences are corrupt beyond redemption. You are saying that the system must be subverted, eroded, terrorized, and coerced, if justice is ever to prevail.~~

"And in so saying, you are subverting and eroding your own capacity to live a constructive life in a free society."

Lyman, discussing violence in recent days by anti-ROTC demonstrators on the campus, told the lawyers that to regain public confidence, universities must use effective discipline, institutional responsiveness, and education.

And most of the education, he insisted, is needed in the form of a history lesson:

"To those old enough to remember totalitarianism at its most virulent, in Hitlerite Germany; to those informed enough to perceive the world of difference between the individual's lot in China or the Soviet Union or the South African Republic and in the United States, whatever our shortcomings; to those possessed of enough perspective to know that freedom begins in the willingness of each individual to recognize the right of others to differ from him, over things that matter, and that this willingness has been a rare phenomenon in the long sweep of man's history; to all such, the dreary, doctrinaire fanaticism of the hard core revolutionary Left is really more frightening than their rocks or their dynamite tragedies or their toying with terrorist tactics."

Part of radical strategy, Lyman said, is to goad administrators into mistakes through weariness. The administration, in turn, tries "to respond strongly enough to constitute a deterrent, but not so strongly as to feed the ever-ready flames of martyrdom."

It is no easy matter to find the right level of response, he noted, because old ground rules don't work today; to ask that they be used "is to ignore the realities of our situation."

Small campus trouble often explodes into big trouble "because of clever and unscrupulous--but effective--exploitation" of a disciplinary action, he said.

The problem of identifying the guilty is monumental during nighttime guerrilla tactics, Lyman reminded his lawyer-listeners. And while mass arrests might be made, it is questionable that charges would hold up.

Furthermore, "as long as there is widespread campus sympathy for the alleged objectives of the rioters, even though there is little sympathy for their tactics, the likelihood is very great that an attempt at mass arrests will only make a bad situation worse."

Supporters of higher education--including alumni, faculty and students--must understand, Lyman said, that "the radical intent is to goad (them) into demanding curbs on freedom of speech and of assembly, so that the cadres of revolution can then be expanded by recruits from the moderates who will be outraged at such infringements of the hard-won freedoms of a democratic and open society."

He noted that Stanford had made many changes in university governance, bringing faculty, students and alumni into decision-making positions, and that an effective campus judicial system, although only two years old, plus use of a court injunction, "has been effective" in stopping disruption.

While such change "does not disarm the more extreme radicals, Lyman said, "it does make harder their task of radicalizing the uncommitted, or making non-violent radicals collaborate in the use of violence."