

Stanford reaffirms ruling to fire Franklin after campus disturbance

By Mary Madison
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STANFORD - The stage was set today for a landmark legal battle as the Stanford University Board of Trustees reaffirmed the firing of Professor H. Bruce Franklin from the faculty.

As expected, the board's action Monday was taken without dissent in a special executive session on campus. The vote was made public Tuesday after notification of the American Civil Liberties Union,

which represents Franklin.

The trustees concurred in the decision of Stanford President Richard Lyman and the Faculty Advisory Board to let Franklin's 1972 ouster stand.

The case had been in the courts for the last eight years until it was returned to Stanford last year for a reappraisal of Franklin's firing.

Now that the university has formally reaffirmed Franklin's ouster, the case is expected to be returned to Santa Clara County Superior Court.

Issues of academic freedom and freedom of speech will be argued all the way to the State Supreme Court if necessary, according to ACLU lawyers.

Franklin, 46, is now a tenured English professor at Rutgers University. He was fired from Stanford for allegedly inciting an anti-Vietnam War rally to shut down Stanford's computer center. He has denied that his White Plaza speech touched off the computer center shutdown.

In a telephone interview today

from his home in Newark, N.J., Franklin said, "Eventually I'm sure this will be settled in the State Supreme Court. There's very little doubt that we can win the case."

Asked whether he would actually return to Stanford to teach if he does win a legal victory, Franklin replied that the whole process of deciding the issue "will take several years, and who can see that many years ahead?"

"My main concern then was the involvement of the university in the country and in the war, and my

main concern now is the right of people to be able to speak and their right to be able to hear views that challenge established authority," he declared.

"This is even more important in the present situation when we have a strong movement of repression and a tremendous heating up of the Cold War by the national leadership," he said.

Franklin is spending the summer putting the final touches on a new

book he has written that will be published this fall by the Oxford University Press. The book is entitled: "Robert A. Heinlein: America as Science Fiction."

Heinlein is the author of 36 books, including "Stranger in a Strange Land."

Franklin, an avowed Maoist, was a leader of Venceremos, a Bay Area revolutionary organization, during the anti-war protests from 1968 to 1971.