

THE STANFORD DAILY OPINIONS

— John Paval —

University proceedings fair

Contrary to Lise Giraud's opinion (*Daily*, May 22 and May 23), former Stanford Prof. Bruce Franklin should not be considered a martyr.

Giraud argued that the University's case is "tinged with enough injustice, hypocrisy, vengefulness and waste to leave an indelible stain." The fault, though, would seem to lie more in the posturing and rhetoric of the critics than in the University's position.

Rhetoric aside, let the following be clear: Franklin was not fired for expressing his political views. Numerous faculty members here openly opposed the Vietnam War without suffering his fate.

Stanford took pains to give Franklin special consideration and a fair hearing. Rather than pressing any action in the courts, the University followed the mannerly procedure of an academic review board and tried to adhere carefully to "due process" in that context.

The Advisory Board recommended removing Franklin only after consideration, argument and deliberation. I am told the vote on the board was divided in the end, hardly the stuff of kangaroo courts or "hanging judges."

Giraud maintains that the former professor "never once committed a violent act" against any person. But in fact, he contributed to violence which affected (and was intended to affect) the whole community. Eyewitness reports indicated he more or less helped to incite a riot.

University not plaintiff

Giraud calls the University "vengeful," as if Stanford were the plaintiff in the ongoing court case. While Franklin presses the case, the University is simply *defending* the earlier decision of Franklin's former *chosen* colleagues.

We are told the University's defense is a "waste" of time, energy and money. But when a principle is tried in the courts (as, for instance, in the *Daily's* recent Supreme Court fight) the issues transcend the expense.

What are the limits for the involvement of professors in mass action which results in the destruction of University property, or anyone's property? What is the distinction between freedom of expression and outright, illegal action? Where does the University's identity and exis-

tence end, and where does the faculty members' own personal freedom meet it?

Not paltry issues

These are not paltry issues. We can hardly afford not to work through them now, while not beset by confusing events. Heaven knows the University did not seek out the opportunity to remove Franklin. In the midst of great stress and unrest, a careful and thoughtful procedure was followed.

Regardless of one's feelings about the decision, the concern for due process and fairness in that situation is a credit to the University. Under any circumstances, we should hope that Stanford can continue to stand for that approach to conflict.

The bitterness of the latest criticism is shocking. Venom must be in endless supply when friends of the University (Trustees Morris Doyle and Robert Brown) are to be attacked for helping out in its defense. Lacking substantial criticism, Giraud resorted to innuendo, implied slurs about personal profiteering.

Facts aside

All facts aside (and they seem to be cast aside by the critics), were the University being defended by complete outsiders, no doubt other baseless innuendos could be fashioned. Let's face it, these are low blows.

The courts may find that the University's proceedings in the Franklin matter ended in error. If so, the University will have to do some re-thinking about the issues involved. Should the court decide in Stanford's favor, however, I wonder from the tone of recent criticism whether there will be equivalent re-thinking from the other point of view.

In any event, the record will show an evenhanded and careful disposition throughout the matter on the University's side, a far cry from the character slurs, innuendo and irrelevancies that some would use to distort the record. Diatribes such as we have been reading do not serve to clear the air; they poison the atmosphere of discourse.

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