

REFUTING BRUCE FRANKLIN

After six weeks of testimony, cross examination, fireworks and boredom, the "trial" of revolutionary professor Bruce Franklin is nearing an end. The case will now go to an Advisory Board of seven tenured professors who will decide whether Bruce is fired or whether he stays on the job.

Each day of the hearings, it became increasingly obvious which side wants Bruce out of Stanford and which side wants him in.

The University Administration found only 23 witnesses to back up their case. Bruce presented over 70, and over 30 potential witnesses were knocked out when the Administration refused to grant immunity from prosecution. In addition, he totally discredited the testimony of four of their witnesses.

While the Administration witnesses have been drawn from the ranks of administrators, police officials, and right wing old ladies, the People's side has had students, faculty, workers and community people, all testifying to Bruce's innocence of the four charges.

The four charges are 1) "significantly contributing" to the disruption of a speech by Henry Cabot Lodge 2) giving a speech, during a campus rally protesting the Laotian invasion, which "urged and incited" people to shut down the Computer Center (where a Stanford Research Institute program planning an amphibious assault on North Vietnam was being run) 3) interfering with the police dispersal of a crowd at the computer center after the police arrived and 4) encouraging people to "use the methods of peoples war" at another rally later that night.

All these charges sound legal, but they are plainly phony. If the Administration had any real evidence, they would have brought charges in a real court, where there are at least rules and precedents, instead of this make believe one.

As the testimony developed, the University Administration was shown to be a liar and the precipitator of everything that went down last winter. When the war related computer project, GAMOT II, was discovered,

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Provost William Miller, the head of research and Lyman's right hand man, tried to hush over the discovery. When, under pressure, SRI withdrew the work, he still kept it quiet. So the mill in at the Comp Center, which he could have stopped, went on.

The University brought the police on campus and then tried to blame a police charge on a crowd outside the Center, on Bruce. But several eyewitnesses narrated how two riot geared deputies set off the charge by grabbing Bruce. With some help, he got away.

The University's main argument for each of the charges is that Bruce is guilty of open advocacy of acts of violence (mainly violence to property). The defence has, therefore, gone to special lengths to affirm that revolutionaries do not see their role as movement tacticians. They do not decide what targets to hit and how to do it. Bruce has stated many times that he believes his job is to take the scattered ideas of the people, put these ideas together, and then present them back to the people in a form that they can act on. Over 70 witnesses have been able to testify that this is, in fact, is what Bruce did do during each of the four incidents.

Naturally, the University has taken great pains to see that these truths do not come out. In a blatant effort to intimidate defense witnesses, the administration denied motions to grant them immunity from testimony. This immediately knocked out at least 30 defense witnesses, many of whom are workers on campus and would be risking their jobs and their necks if they told the whole truth if what happened. Following this, the advisory board declared

that anyone who addressed a crowd in a tense or potentially dangerous atmosphere is responsible for what happens after, and is guilty of incitement in any case, whether an action happens or not. This sort of double-think is not only an attack on the movement, but is a way of muzzling any labor organizing on campus as well. If a student or a professor is not allowed to suggest a student strike, what's going to happen to a worker who calls for a work shut-down?

These hearings are giving people new to Stanford's practices a lot to think about. Wasn't it a shock to hear all those professors testify how they were being beaten and trashed by police attacking the Computer Center?

The testimony during the "People's Offense" (defense) showed how the strategy of United Front built the movement at Stanford. Not all the witnesses agree with Venceremos and other revolutionaries on every single issue, but all are part of a collective effort to turn the University around.

Last February 10, the day the last three charges relate to, Bruce Franklin and many, many others were trying to build a student strike like the one during the Cambodian invasion.

The purpose of such a strike is to "shut down" the University. That is "shut it down as it is" and "open it up" under the control of the people.

What's wrong with Stanford, as with all institutions under Imperialism, is in its ownership and the way the rulers use it to oppress people here and around the world.

As one witness testified about the Cambodia strike, "By the end of the week, you couldn't tell who was running the University."

If this were a real court, the verdict would be absolute acquittal. But whatever the verdict, the people who run Stanford will have a struggle on their hands.

by Doris Youdelman, Stanford Venceremos