

*An Editorial***'Let Truth be in the Field' -- The California Oath**

With indignation sweeping the faculty of the University of California as a result of the Board of Regents' ultimatum ordering professors to sign anti-communist oaths within 65 days or lose their jobs, we note the intelligent and farsighted handling of a case at Harvard. A reprint of the Harvard dean's editorial appears on this page.

A bitter eight-months' battle has been raging in California's state universities. And the regents' action has united the 4,000-odd faculty members more solidly in their "don't-or-die" rebellion. An alternate resolution presented by the faculty was rejected Monday. Now the faculty intends to take the controversy to the U. S. Supreme Court if necessary.

Professor Joel H. Hildebrand, member of a four-man committee of professors and dean of the college of chemistry, declared in a statement endorsed by the entire committee that "no conceivable damage to the university at the hands of hypothetical communists among us could possibly have equalled the damage resulting from the unrest, ill-will, and suspicion engendered by this series of events."

Hildebrand, an avowed anti-communist, described the ultimatum as an "indignity." He agrees that communists should be excluded from the faculty but feels that that objective has been obscured

by the imposition of this oath which casts suspicion on the faculty.

The Harvard incident occurred just one year ago this month. The John Reed Club of Harvard invited Gerhart Eisler to speak at one of their meetings. The university provided a room for the gathering.

It seems that the news announcement of the meeting caught the eye of Fulton Lewis, Jr. Mr. Lewis took it upon himself to warn the public about "subversive activities at Harvard" and urged a "deluge of letters and telegrams" in protest. He pointed out that Eisler was under sentence to one year in prison for refusing to answer questions of the Congressional Committee on Un-American Activities.

Eisler was allowed to speak at Harvard. Meeting reports described a polite show of interest, but little applause.

There were 305 responses to Lewis's requests for protests. Only 14 came from Harvard's 97,000 alumni. Many received were anonymous, indicating that the writers were semi-literate or zealots of one kind or other.

At the time of the incident Wilbur J. Bender, dean of Harvard College, published a statement of policy. We are reprinting a complete text of this statement today. These lines give the key:

"Four years spent in an insulated nursery will produce gullible innocents, not tough-minded realists who know what they believe because they have faced the enemies of their belief."

Already the California oath has had two undesirable effects. The ire of the faculty has been aroused at the imputation of guilt. Public distrust in the loyalty of the professors has been engendered.

Such an oath is unwholesome for a university and reprehensible to educators. It impinges on the free mental climate in which a search for higher knowledge must be conducted. Consider a research scientist who is told that he must avoid certain provinces of investigation. It would constitute a violation of his search for knowledge and truth. No less does such an oath impose restrictions on the provinces of thought when applied to professors.

The opinion of the Harvard dean is infinitely more wise and admirable. It is suggestive of the opinion of John Milton who opposed another odious restriction by saying:

"Though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the earth, so Truth be in the field, we do ingloriously, by licensing and prohibiting misdoubt her strength. Let her and falsehood grapple: who ever knew Truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter?"—H.S.

*A Reprint***Confidence in the Maturity and Intelligence of Students***by the Dean of Harvard*

(A policy statement by Wilbur J. Bender, Dean of Harvard College, made in spring, 1949.)

"The world is full of dangerous ideas, and we are both naive and stupid if we believe that the way to prepare intelligent young men to face the world is to try to protect them from such ideas while they are in college. **Four years spent in an insulated nursery will produce gullible innocents, not tough-minded realists who know what they believe because they have faced the enemies of their beliefs.**

We are not afraid of the enemies of democracy who are willing to express their ideas in the forum. We have confidence in the maturity and intelligence of Harvard students. We have confidence in the strength of our free and dynamic American democracy. There is no danger from an open communist which is half so great as the danger from those who would destroy freedom in the name of freedom. These decadent descendents of Jefferson and Lincoln reveal their lack of faith in American ideals and in Americans. If Harvard students can be corrupted by an Eisler, Harvard College had

better shut down as an educational institution.

'I know of no faster way of producing communists than by making martyrs out of the handful of communists we now have. Forbidding them to speak would be not only treason to the ancient traditions of Harvard and America: It would be proof that we have something to hide, that we have lost faith in our principles and in our way of life. It would be accepting communist practices in the name of Americanism. Whatever may have happened elsewhere, Harvard still believes in freedom and the American way.

"Our policy for student organizations is simple. Any recognized student organizations can hold a meeting in a Harvard building, if they can find a room available, and listen to any speaker they can persuade to come. The fact that a man speaks at Harvard does not mean that Harvard in any way endorses his views or even that the organization involved does. If the Dean's Office were to attempt to decide who would be allowed to speak to a Harvard organization, whose views were safe and

whose weren't, the views of those permitted to speak would then carry Harvard's official endorsement. Furthermore, it would be impossible in practice to agree on what speakers threatened to corrupt our youth. Some people would bar President Truman, other Senator Taft. Still others would bar anti-vivisectionists or opponents of birth control or World Federalists or Christian Scientists or Monsignor Sheen or Colonel McCormick. **The answer is not in the suppression of "dangerous" ideas as in Russia or Japan or Hitler's Germany, but more vigorous statement of American ideas, and faith—which would be well-founded—in the ability of our students to distinguish between good and evil.**

"Harvard College is dedicated to the task of producing mature and independent educated men. I devoutly hope that the time will never come when we are faced with the sorry spectacle of a great University and a great country trembling timorously in fear of the words of a communist or of a demagogic commentator."

*An Editorial***The Worth of Evaluation Depends Not Only on Students**

There have been some opinions expressed on faculty evaluation to the effect that many faculty members tolerate evaluation simply because it is something the students want to do, but that these faculty members cannot accept the evaluation of the students as worthy.

The evaluations are worthless, these critics claim, because of the "chip-on-the-shoulder" attitude of some of the students, and because the identity of the student is not known, the faculty member therefore being unable to determine if the criticism comes

from a person who he considers has good judgment). The evaluations also stress unimportant things, such as untidy appearance, use of slang, tendency of the professor to arrive to class late, and other small things which some professors claim have little if any relation to teaching effectiveness.

To these critics we say:

If you consider faculty evaluation a joke or form of amusement for students, you are mistaken. Most students take it seriously and do their best to evaluate justly; if it is a joke, it is because of the attitude with which the fac-

ulty member reads the evaluation.

Naturally there are some students who do not approve of faculty evaluation; and many students realize the system is far from perfect as it now exists. However, it is a start; and it does have some worth.

Opinions of the students will vary. Professors will get some high ratings and some low ratings in the same field; just as some students have received As the first term, and Bs or Cs the second term of a sequence, the difference in grade not always being the

difference in the quality or content of work, but also the change in professors and the different points of view by which the students' work was graded.

It is unfortunate that a professor cannot tell whether the opinion was expressed by a good student or a poor student. However, the approximate GPA, and the approximate grade earned in that particular class, is a small indication that may help the faculty member.

And if one or two or three items are repeatedly mentioned again and again in the evaluation sheets, a profes-

sor might seriously consider a self-study of that item as it concerns him.

A faculty member who finds criticisms only to say "this is not important" and throws it aside had better look once again at the criticism and see if perhaps it is not this little thing that makes a big difference.

Faculty evaluation is far from the worth it may someday have; but even now, it is not worthless, unless the professors wish to make it so.

Ten minutes time from a year's or term's lectures, does not seem too unjust a request.