

21 January 1971

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

POLITICAL AND PUBLIC

Richard W. Lyman
Office of the President
Stanford University, California, Aptlan

To the Chief Designated Agent of the Board of Trustees of Leland Stanford Junior University, Heirs of the Family Who Stole this Land and the Labor of Those Who Built Their Railroad, War Profiteers and Rulers of the U.S. empire:

I understand from your letter of January 18th that you are charging me with heckling Henry Cabot Lodge, one of the planners and chief administrators of the war against the peoples of Southeast Asia. I do not deny demanding that Lodge and the two representatives of the Hoover Institute answer to the massacre of the men, women, and children of My Lai, the fire bomb and herbicide raids on the countryside of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, the pretence that China is an island in the Pacific Ocean, the invasion and destruction of Korea, and the brutalization and murder of American men sent to die for the profits of the Lodges, the Packards, and your other masters.

I would agree that whatever I and others did on January 11th constitutes inappropriate behavior. The appropriate response to war criminals is not heckling, but what was done to them at Nuremberg: they should be locked up or executed. All of us are indeed guilty of allowing the anti-war movement to slip and slide to the point where our rulers think they now have an open invitation to commit genocide against the peoples of Southeast Asia.

I maintain that it is criminal not to take action against the murderers of the Vietnamese people. You maintain that anyone who takes even the mildest action, such as heckling, should be punished, possibly by being kicked out of his job. Then you propose that we could possibly reach some agreement on this. I can't imagine what this agreement would be, but I certainly would be interested in hearing your ideas. Could it be that you are ready to change sides? I assure you that I am not.

As for a hearing on this dreadful charge. Since I have no way to make a living but to sell my labor, like most people in this country I am at the tender mercy of my employer. But when most people do something their boss doesn't like, they just get booted out. Being a professor at Stanford, I'm in a more privileged position, since I have a right to some kind of formal hearing. Needless to say, I am not going to relinquish that right and thereby place myself entirely within your arbitrary dictatorial power. I demand as public a hearing and as close a semblance to a fair trial as I can get.

Of course I don't expect to be tried by the victims of the Board of Trustees and Ambassador Lodge--the peoples of the Third World, the G.I.'s now throwing fragmentation grenades at their local ranking officers of U.S. imperialism, the poor and working people of the U.S., or its oppressed women and youth. That would be going too far, because they might put you on trial instead. But you could at least try to play your game by your own rules.

On September 25, 1970, your own office, the Office of the President, issued

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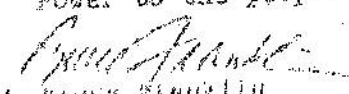
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over your signature a little pamphlet entitled, "The Stanford Legislative and Judicial System: Scope of Authority, Procedures and Recent Action of the SCLC, SJC, and Office of the President." In it there is a section called "Jurisdiction Over Faculty," which acknowledges the legislative power of the Senate resolution of October 10, 1968: "Application to Faculty Members of Judicial Policies Regarding Campus Disruption," included as an appendix to the pamphlet. This resolution states in no uncertain terms that faculty violations of the Policy on Campus Disruption are to be heard by the Stanford Judicial Council, and "The rules of procedure would be identical to those proposed for student violators." You choose to flout this resolution, not even mentioning in your letter the possibility of sending the case to the appropriate body, the Stanford Judicial Council.

What arguments could you, or do you, offer to defend this high-handed attempt to railroad my case to the Advisory Board, which, as you are well aware, is heavily weighted toward those openly prejudiced against me personally and politically? Certainly what I am charged with is merely a violation of the Policy on Campus Disruption, which reads in part: "It is a violation of University policy for a member of the faculty, staff, or student body to (1) prevent or disrupt the effective carrying out of a University function or approved activity, such as lectures, meetings, interviews, ceremonies, the conduct of University business in a University office, and public events." To maintain that a simple violation of this policy constitutes "personal conduct substantially impairing the individual's performance of his appropriate functions within the University community" robs the existing legislative acts of any meaning and is also patently ridiculous. But suppose you are right, and whatever I did was so terrible that I ought to be fired. You argue that you are sending the case to the Advisory Board because my act may warrant penalties ranging up to dismissal and that students brought before the Stanford Judicial Council for "participating in the same event" are "exposed there to a range of penalties much broader than those which a Faculty Hearing Group could render." But then why not do what you're supposed to do, refer my case to the Stanford Judicial Council, which has been delegated the power in such cases to inflict penalties ranging up to "the instigation of procedures which could lead to dismissal" (Senate resolution of October 10, 1968)?

What I am accused of doing is, I believe, exactly the same thing as the nine students and one Stanford worker now being charged by the Stanford Judicial Council. If I am to be forced to trial for doing a very small part of my duty to my brothers and sisters in Southeast Asia, I demand that I be tried alongside these ten comrades, as both the letter and spirit of the existing Stanford legislative and judicial system require. But in the end we will all be judged not by an arm of the dinosaur of U.S. imperialism, but by the peoples of the world, who will bury all such ghosts and monsters. As the Black Panther Party has pointed out, we are now in the Decade of the Boomerang.

In the spirit of Nguyen Van Troi,
Power to the people!


Bruce Stambler
Central Committee, Vancouver