

The new Regents, the new justice

For the past two months there has been a sizable amount of skepticism concerning what the final response of the Board of Regents would be to Stephen Rozman.

It appeared at the December meeting of the Regents that they were interested in finding out the facts of the professor's involvement in last May's Indochina war protests, which the Spelts Committee had labeled inappropriate.

The impression given by the Regents was one of concern for justice. So at that time, a faculty committee was instructed to determine those facts. The committee was composed of the most respected scholars in this community. Their credentials-impeccable.

The members of the Holtzclaw committee, after instructed by the Regents to find out the facts, set about to do exactly that. The committee conducted extensive, as well as costly hearings. It has been estimated that this university spent at least \$5,000 assembling the facts. Was it really worth it to spend this money if there was no intention on respecting the findings of that report? This is only one of the secondary questions that students and faculty might want to ask.

Before firing Rozman, Regent Elliot borrowed a description from the Scranton Commission Report. He said, "The proper functions of the university are teaching and learning, research and scholarship. A moment later, Elliot moved to fire Rozman. Elliot's support with the Regents, in his motion to have Rozman fired, was unanimous.

However, it seems that the university is still divided as to whose judgment to accept, the Regents or the Faculty. There is no question but that the Regents have carte blanche authority to do whatever they want. Nor is there much of a question as to what extreme they will go to prove it.

The Fact-Finding Committee concluded that Professor Rozman was not guilty of inappropriate behavior. Then presumably he is innocent. Extending the Regents' logic, if he is innocent then he should be fired for not being guilty.

But if such Yossarian-like rationale is to be accepted, then there are a number of implications which also must be understood.

To begin with, members of this community must now accept the Regents' edict which implies we do not enjoy privileges guaranteed in the Bill of Rights. More specifically, students and faculty are told that they have the right to protest. They are not told that any protest can be construed as disruptive and therefore unacceptable by the Regents. But with the results of the Rozman case, it seems that we must accept this abridgement of our rights as university policy.

Any one of us could be Stephen Rozman. And many of us are. Stephen Rozman protested the U. S. invasion of Cambodia. So did many other faculty members and students. The Holtzclaw committee reported that there was no reason to single out one professor and blame him for everything that went wrong on this campus last spring.

But what else can we conclude they did?

In their resolution to fire Rozman, the Regents said they wanted to make it known that they would not tolerate disruption. They said they were very concerned about making it understood that disorder had no place in the university. Well, the Regents showed us. They definitely *do* want law and order. However, the price they will pay for that "commodity" should scare the Hell out of everybody connected with this university.

Mick Moriarty

