ACADEMIC FREEDOM—1954

What Is It? -- How Much Is There? -- How Much Should There Be?
Cavallaro's Stand

**BHE Chairman Calls Probes Essential**

By RAY HAMILTON

The election of Joseph B. Cavallaro as chairman of the Board of Higher Education on May 18, 1953 aroused great controversy among both students and faculty.

Mr. Cavallaro, a well-known "anti-subversive," declared immediately after his election that the "McCarthy, Veale and Senate Committees have done a good job." He asserted that he favored "strong measures in dealing with Communist teachers."

After severe criticism from many sides, he qualified his stand. He did "just applaude witch-hunts" but only welcomed the assistance of Congressional investigations of subversives and Communists in public colleges, the BHE chairman said. A month later he elaborated upon this point. "It is imperative, of course, that the utmost care should be exercised in investigations of this kind so that no innocent person should be placed in an unfair light before his fellow men," he said.

He in no way, however, changed his stand on the need for investigations. "Investigations to root out those who sow the seeds of treason, who would deprive you and me of the right to worship God and to respect the dignity of fellow men and to enjoy the right of free discussion in the free world, are essential if we are to preserve those rights," he declared.

In June the BHE elected a special committee to study the question of alleged subversives in the municipal colleges, Gustave Rosenberg, a New York trial lawyer, was appointed chairman. When asked at this time the purpose of the committee he answered, "It has been the conviction of the colleges and universities throughout the land that theirs was the responsibility of ridding their staffs of subversives and where supported by their governing boards they were able to do so it is to this responsibility that we all address ourselves."

In this he was, in some respects, contradicting Mr. Cavallaro's testimony before the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee (the Jenner Committee) which stated that congressional investigations had "given very definite assistance" to educational authorities in their efforts to meet the problem of classroom and campus infiltration.

On September 28, just five days after the Board of Regents declared the Communist Party subversive, the BHE acting under the Feinberg Law, empowered its special committee to institute a "full-scale" investigation in the City Colleges. The powers of the committee included the calling of all members of faculties and staffs for questioning, with "disciplinary action" for those who refused to cooperate; the right to require production of "such relevant books, records and papers as may be necessary," and the right to question under oath. Earlier Mr. Cavallaro, discussing the possibility of BHE investigations had said, "The BHE most assuredly will not interfere with honest, free discussion in the classroom."

The special committee hired three professional "fact-finders" to "ascertaint what evidence, if any, exists as to members of the faculties and staffs of Municipal Colleges who may be members of subversive organizations." The investigations ended after a few resignations from the faculties of the municipal colleges. The BHE chairman announced that "all present employees of the Board of Higher Education (meaning faculty) are loyal." The chances of Mr. Cavallaro's re-election as chairman are slim with the "McCarthy, Velde and Jenkins" anti-subversive, the BHE acting under the Feinberg Law, empowered its special committee to institute a "full-scale" investigation in the City Colleges.

The investigations ended after a few resignations from the faculties of the municipal colleges. The BHE chairman announced that "all present employees of the Board of Higher Education (meaning faculty) are loyal." The chances of Mr. Cavallaro's re-election as chairman are slim with the "McCarthy, Velde and Jenkins" anti-subversive, the BHE acting under the Feinberg Law, empowered its special committee to institute a "full-scale" investigation in the City Colleges.
The Brooklyn College Story
Was It Suppression, or Was It Merely Defense Against 'Inimical' Groups?

By JACK and LEON LEVINE

Last December, an editorial in the Brooklyn College Kingsman took note of "marked change" in the atmosphere at Brooklyn College. It wondered what had happened to the opposition, even the misguided opposition of four years ago.

In the past four years, a newspaper as had its charter revoked, the student governing body was completely changed without a student referendum and two political organizations have been dropped off the campus. President Harry D. Gideonse has said that the college has the right to refuse a charter or to withdraw recognition from any group that was or had become "inimical to the best interests of the college itself or of the wider community."

The Old...

The next week, Dr. Portnoy resigned as faculty adviser, stating that his position had become "untenable." The paper was informed by the Faculty-Studen Committee on Publications (FSCP) that it could not continue publication until a new faculty was approved by the committee. The FSCP consisted of four students and four faculty members.

The paper immediately began a search for a new adviser and after several rejections found a member of the English Department who was willing to fill the nomination, claiming that it refused to approve "stop gap" advisers.

The next issue was the last ever published by Vanguard. In the second issue of the term which appeared on Friday, October 6, the editors of equal size appeared in the first issue, pro and con editorials on "controversial issues." Vanguard accepted the new rulings and made a short-lived return to the Brooklyn College campus the following fall. Four editorials of equal size appeared in the first issue, pro and con editorials on the suspension of the Labor Youth League and the FSCP reorganization of the paper's editorial policy.

The next issue was the last ever published by Vanguard. In the second issue of the term which appeared on Friday, October 6, the editors presenting the paper's stand exceeded those of the opposition by a total of thirty-eight lines.

And the New...

The Old...

The new rulings included the printing of pro and con editorials on "controversial issues." Vanguard continued to search for a faculty adviser and finally Dr. Portnoy agreed to return as faculty adviser on May 24. However, the paper was not granted permission to publish until certain revision in its charter were accepted.

The revisions called for by the FSCP included the printing of pro and con editorials on all "controversial" issues. Each editorial was to be of the same length to insure equal presentation of both views. The final decision of what was "controversial" was to be in the hands of the editor-in-chief. The Vanguard's Governing Board, which formulated the long-range editorial policy of the paper, was to be revamped to give other student organizations representation. Students who were not staff members were to be allowed to submit editorials on "controversial issues."
Other Times—Other Problems

One CCNY President Hated Tobacco; Another Tried to Suppress Anti-ROTC Sentiment; A Third Answered Controversy With the Swat of an Umbrella

By JOAN SNYDER

Academic freedom at City College has had many cudgels—even an umbrella—raised against it. It has meant such things as the right to term the Faculty "pompous" and the right not to wear an ROTC uniform. Though the forms have been diverse, its essence is unchanging: the keynote is liberty, even the liberty to be wrong.

The Free Academy's first President, in 1849, was General Horace Webster. He loathed tobacco as well as the undergraduate newspaper The Collegian. He lectured against the first as "a disgusting weed" and blackballed the editor of the second from Phi Beta Kappa.

Military discipline was maintained by General Alexander Webb, who succeeded Webster in 1869. The second General, whose replica now stands swordless, used the weapon of suspension against his student adversaries. When Mercury, then a serious publication, fell out of step with him in a critical editorial, its Managing Editor was replaced.

The sub-rebelting stopped with the appearance of President John H. Finley in 1903. A genuine humanitarian, Finley cherished freedom of discussion and unorthodox ideas. Among the products of his understanding were Student Council and The Campus, a publication which was then leading the fight for student responsibility.

His leaving ended an "age of enlightenment" in the College's history. In 1914, President John Mezes corralled the students back into the authoritarian fold. His administration mirrored the tense national atmosphere after World War I. Loyalty oaths were required at the College. The publications were cracked down upon.

But a young editor of The Campus, Felix Cohen, held on to the idea of freedom of expression. He attacked the then compulsory ROTC course in his editorial columns until forbidden to do so. Subsequent issues of The Campus carried a black-bordered blank column on the front page, with the following statement inside. "The Campus may make no further reference in any of its columns to a certain course at the College.” Ultimately, by virtue of Cohen's irreverent courage, the College's Military Science course was made an elective. It was a significant victory for the student body.

But 1928 saw the inauguration of Frederick Robinson as President for a 10-year no-holds-barred regime which might be symbolized by a stenographer and an umbrella.

One of the President's earliest public acts was dismissal of the Editor-in-Chief of The Campus for an editorial deriding the faculty's "pomposity." He next indicated his views on free expression by suspending two students for making remarks "disrespectful" to the faculty in a college symposium. Charges arose that Robinson sent a stenographer to every undergraduate meeting to take down the speeches.

Evidently, was a man busy on all fronts. The publications again roused his concern. In fact, his journalistic tastes caused the entire editorial staff of The Campus to resign, charging interference.

To Robinson tangled with the student press, the student body at large grew restive under his oppressive bylaws. One forbade the use of College buildings and grounds by any political party or for agitation against the policies of the College, the city, the state, or the nation.

Discontent finally erupted over the question of a "radical" instructor whose contract wasn't renewed. A mob of outsiders marched on the Main Building one evening, and paraded through the corridors joined by evening session students who had left their classes. The police came to quell the riot, and ten students...
The Day CCNY Students Walked Out

Metropolitan Newspapers Called the Strike 'Communist-Led'; Students Saw It a Fight For Equality

By SELWYN RAAB

The proven fact of "Racial Discrimination" and the ingredients of "anti-semitism" are present in the case of the student body of City College of New York. In April, 1949, almost the entire student body of City College refused to attend any classes for five days. The strike was called by some students as a small faction who believed that the number of Negroes in Army Hall, the dormitory, was being purposely increased by some College officials. As early as November, 1947, an unhealthy situation was disclosed when Student Council was successful in persuading President Harry N. Wright to appoint a six-man Faculty committee to investigate charges of segregation at the Army Hall dormitory.

Four months later the report of this special investigating committee substan-tiated charges of racial segregation that had been leveled against William C. Davis, then Director of the Army Hall dormitory. In March, 1950, Davis resigned his post as Director and was re-appointed by President Wright to his former position as an instructor in the Department of Economics.

In making his decision Professor Knickerbocker said that in view of his "complete exoneration" by the Faculty, the Board of Higher Education and by the State Commissioner of Education he could now continue his teaching without the added responsibilities and duties of the chairmanship.

The strike incident is still alive. Numerous students were arrested by the police—many of obviously spurious charges. The strike was also depicted in many of the metropolitan newspapers as communist inspired and many facts were distorted.

After five days the walkout fizzled and students began returning to classes. Davis and Knickerbocker still had not been removed from their positions.

In February, 1950, Knickerbocker announced that he would not seek reelection to the chairmanship of his department at the end of the spring term. In making his decision Professor Knickerbocker said that in view of his "complete exoneration" by the Faculty, the Board of Higher Education and by the State Commissioner of Education he could now continue his teaching without the added responsibilities and duties of the chairmanship.

The strike incident is still alive after three years. Two officers of Student Council during the strike brought a libel suit against The New York Times and Prof. Knickerbocker because of the "inimical" remarks discriminatorily denying a medal to a student (the medal was later granted), and that the faculty complained against him were subsequently denied promotions.

The following day the FSCP appointed a committee of students to form a new paper and four days after the expiration of Vanguard's charter, a new paper, Kingsman appeared. The Kingsman is the present publication of the BC day session. For a short time the BC branch of the Students for Democratic Action and six other campus organizations published a newspaper Campus News in an attempt to establish a second newspaper.

Campus News ceased publication in January 1951, when SDA was suspended for the remainder of the semester by the FSCP for publishing a paper without its permission.

The Vanguard did not return despite protests by the BC Student Government Association (Student Council), the National Students Association and the American Civil Liberties Union.

When the constitution of the student governing body, the Student Government Association, expired in January, it was replaced by a new body, the Student Activities Organization whose members were to be chosen by organizations rather than in school-wide elections. Two political organizations have been dropped from the Brooklyn campus in the last four years.

At the beginning of Fall '50 remainer of the Labor Youth League, which had been granted a charter at the end of the previous semester, received notice that it had been suspended. The suspension was due to a re-evaluation of certain political groups in view of the Korean War.

In October, 1951, the Charter of the BC branch of the Young Progressives of America was revoked by the FSCP for alleged Communist ties.

The Administration of Brooklyn College has been successful in making its campus "one big happy family" by getting rid of "inimical" newspapers, but as the editorial in the Kingsman pointed out, the ultimate result could prove disastrous because those students who challenge and question rather than accept blindly are decreasing in number.
NYU Professors Have 'Private Eyes' to Contend With: Washington Cancels Political Forum; McCarthy Embarks On Crusade Against Harvard

By DAVE PFIEFFER

NYU

On October 14, 1953, the Student Council of New York University went on record against "any investigation of college or college except with regard to their competence." SC accepted the report of

its Civil Liberties Committee calling for "support of faculty members who are brought before a committee whose purpose is to inquire into their personal beliefs, affiliations or political activities."

Defending "the right to learn", the NYU Council added that this right should not be taken from a student or teacher nor disciplinary action taken against him because he is involved in governmental investigations.

TEMPLE U.

The Student Senate of Temple University declared on October 14, 1953 that "Academic freedom must include the right of a professor as an American citizen to act upon his individual beliefs in accordance with his Constitutional rights." This view was stated in a resolution protesting the dismissal of Dr. Barrows Dunham, head of the Temple Department of philosophy for failure to answer questions before the House Un-American Activities Committee.

The resolution was adopted by the student group in answer to a statement by Dr. Robert L. Johnson, president of Temple University, when he announced Dunham's dismissal. Dr. Johnson stated that he has "the firm conviction that a teacher in an institution dedicated to truth is called upon to deal candidly and fully with responsible government authorities to preserve the freedom of our society."

The Student Senate went on to query the University Board of Trustees on their interpretation of the meaning of the Fifth Amendment. Is the Fifth Amendment "for the use of the guilty alone" and if so, "would not the invocation of the Fifth Amendment be a prima facie implication that the witness is either guilty of a crime or guilty of misuse of the amendment?"

WASHINGTON U.

Chancellor Arthur H. Compton of Washington University declared recently that "the wise course is to refuse to listen" to persons "who habitually distort the truth." He made this comment according to a report in the WU Student Life, when denying permission to a group of students to invite James Forest, Communist state organizer for Missouri to participate in a political forum-debate series. Chancellor Compton went on to say that such a person couldn't even be trusted to truthfully present the views of the Communists.

The student directors of the forum series opposed Compton's rejection of the idea, saying that "While we agree with the Chancellor's evaluation of Communist methods and aims, we do not feel that his conclusion that we should 'refuse to listen to them further' is justified."

"We object," they went on, "to the abridgement of our right to hear answers to certain basic questions in the evaluation of the Communist Party of the United States . . . It is sufficient that fallacies, oversights, contradictions, factual distortions and outright lies be revealed by a faculty panel qualified to search out and demonstrate irregularities in the use of logical methods and factual presentation. Given this analysis, have faith in the mental capacities of university audience to evaluate what has been, if irrefutably demonstrated."
**Opinion**

**Question:** What do you think is the greatest threat to academic freedom today?

**STUDENTS**

Sandy Hopper, Student Council President: "The greatest threat to academic freedom is joining the dangers to all parts of American democracy. There is a general attack today on all the freedoms. This attack is coming from the lunatic fringe. This fringe is made up of people with a fantastically narrow intellectual attitude. They have always been around but the difference today is that they now have McCarthy as a rallying point." Another danger, is the communists themselves. They are not an equal danger, but if given a chance will infiltrate faculty groups and the Student Council. They will infiltrate and use these groups for their own designs.

Charles H. Dockendorff, President of the Robert A. Taft Young Republicans' and Acting President of Students for Americanism: "I think the greatest threat to academic freedom comes from the same source as the threat to our freedom; that is communism. I think that those who advance the fantastic doctrine that a person's mere membership in the Communist Party does not disqualify him from holding positions in school or government are really doing harm to academic freedom. People who fight against the purposes which are behind McCarthy (the purpose of routing out the evil) are rendering a disservice. In other words people who do not recognize the threat of communism are rendering a disservice to academic freedom.

Jerry Tavel, representing The Young Progressive of America: "In our estimation the greatest threat to academic freedom today is McCarthyism. All expression that is trying to create fear, hysteria and supposed disorder is apt to fall in the McCarthyism category. It is a propaganda and so-called "radical," "left" economic and political views are "subversive" and "un-American." McCarthyism, like its European predecessors, uses anti-communism as a method designed to make us a silent generation incapable of voicing our demands for peace, security and free enquiry. Students should unite, regardless of political differences, in order to beat back the clear and present danger of McCarthyism."

**FACULTY**

Professor Coleman O. Parsons (English): The greatest threat to academic freedom today is the four teachers who have. They are no afraid of losing their jobs that they do not resist the pressure to conform. Students, on the other hand, are more courageous because they don't have a job to lose. They do stay on the safe side, however, in order to protect their future. City College is no example. I have found no pressures while working here.

Professor Ephraim Cross (Romance Languages): The threat is the current movement directed and carried out by high-placed economic and political groups. They brand dissenting and so-called "radical," "left" economic and political views as "subversive" and "un-American." Thus the threat is the increased state of exploitation and anti-intellectualism through a cultivated ignorance imposed upon a docile, accepting, intimidated, and corrupted populace—dumb, driven cattle.

Prof. Bally W. Diffie (History): In the twenty-four years that I have been teaching at City College, I have felt no pressure; I never felt that I had to say or do anything because someone didn't want me to. I know that some people in the teaching profession are intimidated but I have never been under such pressures.
Past Problems at CCNY

(Continued from Page 5)

The Campus Suspended

Dean Brophy Stops Publication Terms April Fool Issue Offensiveness

By PAUL BAERGER

A year and one-half ago publication of the undergraduate newspaper Campus was suspended and six members of the Managing Board were also suspended as a result of an April Fool edition of the newspaper.

On the morning of April 2, 1951, Students and members of the Managing Board were also suspended as a result of an April Fool edition of the newspaper.

The story was in reference to the basketball scandal which had swept City College that same spring. Other stories in the paper included several about college personalities, and while the Campus used names other than those of actual officials, it was not too difficult to see who was the party intended.

One story was headlined: "Sprite Laughs off Attack on Female Sec'y," the article went on to give an account of an alleged attack on a secretary by the supposed president of the college, a man the Campus named Harvey N. Sprite.

Some members of the City College faculty and administration took offense at some of the stories which had been printed associated with the then-president of the college, Harry N. Wright. The case was taken by Dean Daniel F. Brophy (Dean of Students). On April 5, four days after the April Fool issue appeared, Dean Brophy called the editors of the Campus to his office and told them what his opinion was regarding the issue.

Later, another meeting with the editors was held, and at this time six members of Campus' Managing Board were suspended. Publication of the paper was also halted. The penalty imposed upon the six students was to run until they made personal apologies to any people who might have been offended by the issue, and these persons had notified Dean Brophy that an apology had been made.

General opinion around the college was that the six students were suspended mainly as a result of the undue publicity which the April Fool issue received in the metropolitan area.

Many people felt that the issue was not brought as a result of the gross attack on public opinion, but the whole matter might have been forgotten.

During the period of suspension for the paper and its editors, several organizations proposed a meeting to the paper's editors, and editorially, they should not be allowed to be in the record of the editors, particularly since they were good students and good journalists.

At the same time the Student Council by a vote of 25 to 2, passed a resolution stating that having the newspaper will aid in cleaning up an import situation.

The members of Campus' Managing Board made their apologies to all concerned were reinstated.

One week later on May 3rd, the Campus was again published. The time had elapsed from publication of the April Fool edition was not more than one month. However, incident was soon forgotten things rapidly returned to normal.

Academic Freedom Week starting tomorrow will be inaugurated by a meeting at Great Hall at noon.