

SACKED BY BARD

Joel Kovel

In July 2009, my 21-year professorship was unilaterally terminated by the dictate of my employer, Bard College, of Annandale, New York. What follows is my account of why and how this happened.

An Agreeable Beginning

In the summer of 1987 I received an invitation from Leon Botstein, Bard's President, inviting me to join the faculty as the "Alger Hiss Professor of Social Studies." I was to receive an endowed Chair, that is, a Presidential appointment outside the tenure system. Tenure or no, this was excellent news. I had been at loose ends since leaving the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, where I had directed the residency training program, and with it, my psychiatric-psychoanalytic career, in 1985; and the appointment gave me some job security and confirmed me as a public intellectual outside of the medical orbit. Politically, it was a dream come true. There was no mistaking the Hiss Chair for anything less than an endowed position on the left, perhaps the first such ever in academia. I had been forced out of Einstein medical school in large measure because of political belief. Now, it seemed I was to be rewarded for the same.

Though Hiss's notoriety has dimmed with time, his case remains one of the most infamous episodes of the great Red Scares of the 1950s. Trusted aide to FDR who accompanied him to Yalta, organizer of the United Nations, and President of the Carnegie Endowment, the patrician Hiss was accused of having committed espionage for the Soviet Union. He was eventually convicted of perjury and made to serve 44 months in federal prison after a series of sensational trials that among other things, sharply divided the American left and made Richard M. Nixon famous. I was (and remain) one of those who believed Hiss to have been wrongfully accused and convicted. This was related to the fact that I had, independently of the offer from Bard, come to know him as a friend. My affection for Alger was both for the integrity of his character and his sharply leftward political views. The first trait reinforced the authenticity of his claims of innocence; and the second provided a

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cogent motive for the crusade to bring him, and with him, the radical implications of the New Deal, down.¹

Hiss was a family friend of the Botsteins. With his career ruined and time on his hands, he had helped Leon, the youngest college president in US history, steer Bard from a brush with bankruptcy into more prosperous and seemingly serene waters. Botstein showed loyalty in assembling an endowed chair to honor his mentor and courage in getting it accepted by a dubious world. Originally, the post had been constructed on a rotating one-year basis. But the well of suitable candidates willing to deal with the obloquy of being associated with someone so controversial soon dried up—until Botstein found me, who positively reveled in being the “Alger Hiss Professor at Bard,” and was eager to make it a permanent post.

Bard College was founded in 1860, through the endowment of a prosperous local merchant. The endowment fell upon evil days, and Bard passed through phases of being a Episcopal seminary and a unit of Columbia University before settling in as a kind of beacon of the counterculture. I visited the campus for a conference in the 1970s and was moderately charmed by its scruffy and left-leaning atmosphere. One could observe the handle-less water pump in the eerily empty town square of Annandale and learn that, yes, this was the pump that didn’t work because the “vandals took the handle,” as Bob Dylan put it in “Subterranean Homesick Blues,” his landmark song written while staying on the premises. But the school was much more than a resort for drugged-out hippies. Having been a home for refugees from Nazi terror, Bard had developed into a substantial community of left-wing resistance in the years before I arrived. The Hiss Chair, whatever the personal motives behind its formation, was also part of an internal Bard tradition of nay-saying to state power, a tradition I felt honored in joining—and naively felt would continue after my arrival. I would not have guessed that my appointment was to be the last in this line, and that the wind would soon begin blowing in the opposite direction.

For roughly the first half of my time at Bard, such complaints as I might muster were muffled by the real benefits of the job. I had prestige, comfort (never any problem in parking!), a reasonable income, pretty much complete freedom to teach what I wanted and a rather easy teaching load to boot. Almost all of the students were of decent caliber, and the good ones were as good as one could reasonably hope for, and in some cases, really creative. The faculty was down the line more centrist than I, but people were friendly and seemed sincere in calling me “the conscience of Bard.” On my part, I chose to interpret the Hiss Chair as a mandate to introduce radical thought into the program. And so I became a kind of “Professor of Marxist Studies,” and took advantage of my freedom to propound as relentlessly an anti-capitalist viewpoint as I could muster. And nobody complained—or to be exact, nobody on campus complained. Throughout my time as Hiss Professor I could expect a steady beat of right-wing hate mail, including attacks by the *New York Post*

and the remarkable Ann Coulter. These were annoyances and not serious threats, however, and until the time of the events to be recounted, were always neutralized as necessary by presidential support.

The high point of my time at Bard came in 1998 when, in full-quixotic mode, I undertook to run for the United States Senate on the Green Party line, against the Republican incumbent Alphonse D'Amato and his Democratic challenger, Charles Schumer. As this meant tossing out normal academic routine for the Fall semester, I sought out Botstein and asked him if the venture was all right with the college. More than all right, came back the reply: but you must promise us this, that you will bring all the students into your campaign as much as possible, giving them a crash course in electoral politics. And so I did, recruiting a considerable number of students into a lively campaign committee and considerably lifting my own spirits in the process.

Leon's attitude was consistent with an announcement made at a faculty meeting earlier in the semester that, owing to the growing influence of people like George Soros, the school was leaving behind its relaxed countercultural identity and joining the world of democratic activism. A spate of foreign satellite academic programs in places like St. Petersburg and Cape Town bore witness to this, as did a project of prison education—in my view, the finest achievement of the Botstein era. All of this burnished Bard's reputation as the school that put the "liberal" in "liberal arts" and made progressive people glad to send their offspring to the lovely campus high above the Hudson. But what does being liberal mean in a world where self-proclaimed liberal democracies lay waste to foreign lands behind shields of high purpose? Which is to ask: what did Leon Botstein build with the Bard College Alger Hiss saved for him; and further, what sort of man is this complicated and many-sided person?

It would be an exaggeration to claim that Botstein and I were friends, but for some years we got along. I cannot say what Leon thought of me at the beginning. There were times when he seemed to visibly blanch at my views, but he also seemed to feel satisfied that I did my pedagogical work with enthusiasm and introduced a serious level of radical thought to the program, in accordance with the college's credo.

My own feelings were quite complex and never comfortable. There is an overweening pride about the man and a sense of always being on stage that precludes ease in his presence. Botstein's musical ambitions are well known and shall be passed over here, but it often seemed that he was performing, both individually and in his frequent public holdings forth, and that his interlocutor was also his instrument. An arch wit was often trotted out on such occasions, accompanied by verbal flourishes that asserted his command over language, and of the situation, and person, before him. What never appeared, at least to my eyes, was a sense of

reciprocity with others. The Botstein position was always that of the Master. I never saw him in the presence of the money-men who were *his* masters in his intricate affairs. But the Botstein I knew was a man apart, self-conscious to the point of pomposity and walled in by his persona. He would never let himself go; but there were times when he let loose in a verbal barrage of compulsive logorrhea—though it also seemed that he would make a virtue out of necessity and use these outbursts for ulterior ends. Leon told me once in one of these moods that he was too unmanageable and uncomfortable with bureaucratic structures to advance higher in the educational world than as the president of little Bard.

Meanwhile he infused little Bard with a heavy dose of autocracy. One knew from the beginning that this putatively liberated zone of academia depended entirely on the skills and charisma of one man in raising money from his Board of Trustees, handpicked it may be added, by the President himself from the ranks of finance capital given the lack of normal channels of funding such as governmental grants and a solid endowment. Back in the days of my good fortune I often wondered what would happen if Leon got sick, had an accident, or contrary to his own assessment, would be shifted to a higher level in the system (in the 2000 presidential campaign there was talk, for example, that he might become Secretary of Education in a Gore administration). He seemed, simply, irreplaceable and godlike on his small stage, his rule a bizarre admixture of an absolutist core and a liberal-progressive façade which would steadily disintegrate under its influence.

It does not require any special insight to see that the structure of power at Bard was a recipe for the steady undercutting of the college's left tradition. Without funding from sources like state legislatures with some connection to democratic processes, or endowment funds which are, generally speaking, embedded in stable securities and regulated by internal control mechanisms, the college was bound to move rightward under the conjoined influence of finance capital and charismatic leadership. In doing so it brought forth the deep rift in Botstein's world-view. Markedly hostile to any spiritual interpretation of existence or to any notion of revolutionary justice, Botstein sought and found his niche in the reproduction of great-power Western values, liberal-democratic in external form, deeply reactionary, racist, and authoritarian in substance. Under the auspices of this autocratic structure, Bard's tradition of good works turned into window dressing and fodder for legitimation.

The faculty was understandably obsessed by their benign despot. I observed from my first days on campus how feared and hated the president was by his faculty, especially when his back was turned, and also how he divided them from each other through gossip and favoritism in the cultivation of willing accomplices/administrators. The chief dynamic came from Botstein's extraordinary control over the tenure process, each instance of which at Bard depends upon the President as

final arbiter. This striking abuse of executive power produced a number of what would have to be called Academic Show Trials, in which an obviously outstanding candidate with unanimous support from the faculty, glittering letters from external judges and a glowing record of service to the students and the community would be denied tenure for no discernable reason except that the President didn't want him/her. As Botstein said in so many words on one, particularly egregious occasion (significantly, relating to a candidate who could be perceived as too sympathetic to Islam): "I know that Professor X is an outstanding fellow, but I also know what you don't, that in fifteen years Professor X won't fit into the big picture of what I want this college to be. And so he will have to go." Thus the motto of the Botstein regime at Bard: *L' Ecole, c'est moi!*

It pains me to say that Botstein's loyalty to Hiss and gratitude for his support in a time of trouble muted my doubts about Bard. I refused to play the faculty games and to go along with his tactics. But there is no doubt that I held back from criticizing, and even supported him at times in the endless round of chit-chat that suffuses every academic setting. However, this was an unstable equilibrium that would break down under the inexorable pressure of events.

The Real World of Academia

When I was a youth in love with learning I fancied that colleges were sedate settings for the cooperative pursuit of truth. That is to say, I myself generated as illusion the propaganda that places like Bard foist on the public with their slick brochures. The reality, one learns, is more brutal and mediated by the fiscal dimension of things. Yes, certain institutions of the so-called higher learning have genuinely beneficent intentions, for example, to heal our ecological crisis, and they develop programs and find funders to support these. But such are, by the nature of things in capitalist society, destined to be marginal. Bard was once marginal, in its hoary-glory days of countercultural freedom. Once Leon Botstein got his hands on it, however, he put his stamp on the institution and drove it from the margins to the right. Dreamy counterculture yielded to High Art—and especially High Music, the President's domain—sustained by the great wealth that would finance the building of a \$75 million performance center and pay for its exorbitantly expensive maintenance. A rickety environmental studies program was replaced by a glossy school of Environmental Policy Studies whose goal was to train bureaucrats to manage nature on behalf of the capitalist state. And the college as a whole began to move in the orbit of the National Security State and to embrace its foreign policy goals.

Bard was particularly vulnerable to rapid shifts of this sort by virtue of the fact that its funding came principally from direct donations by the Board of Trustees, and

thus had to depend, like Blanche DuBois, upon “the kindness of strangers,” or so Botstein’s mythologizing of his plucky little school told us on countless occasions. In reality, the college’s budgeting and finance is an utterly non-transparent process, and the central control mechanism of the Botsteinian autocracy; while the college’s Board of Trustees is hand-picked by the President and held in place by his charisma. Here Botstein’s performative skills have played a great role, as does the fact that those most suitable for the sales pitch are financiers reflecting the most ruthless fraction of capital, and also the one most ideologically suitable to align with the projects of empire.

It did not take long for this tendency to appear. A year after my appointment, James Chace received the next Presidential appointment, an endowed Chair named for Henry Luce, the founder of Time, Inc., and dedicated, like Luce, to “freedom of expression.” Chace, now gone from this world and an amiable and progressive fellow while he was around, had been editor of *Foreign Affairs* from 1970 to 1983. In contrast to the Hiss Chair, Chace had a budget to create events; this became one of the means by which he connected our little college to the Council on Foreign Relations. In his train came a grand pageant of Power Intellectuals² and contributors to the *New York Review*, along with many institutional adjustments reflecting Bard’s growing association with the Council and other arms of the Security State (including, eventually, a liaison with the US Military Academy at West Point). Noam Chomsky (2010) has summarized the world-view well:

The term “stability” has a technical meaning in discourse on international affairs: domination by the U.S. Thus no eyebrows are raised when James Chace, former editor of *Foreign Affairs*, explains that in order to achieve “stability” in Chile in 1973, it was necessary to “destabilize” the country—by overthrowing the elected government of President Salvador Allende and installing the dictatorship of Gen. Augusto Pinochet, which proceeded to slaughter and torture with abandon and to set up a terror network that helped install similar regimes elsewhere, with U.S. backing, in the interest of stability and security.

In sum, the Alger Hiss Chair was undercut by the same forces that did in the man it honored. However, throughout my first, happy, decade at Bard this was more a matter of not seeing things happen rather than outright repression. I witnessed the steady attrition of my appearances at college-wide functions; or the complete by-passing of my advice (*bona fide*, given my growing reputation as a student of the ecological crisis) on how to restructure the environmental series program, as well as total isolation from its operation. But the comfort level remained high and I had no particular reason to worry about my future at Bard as we entered the new millennium.

Trouble in Paradise

It was Peter Linebaugh who sounded the alarm—historian of Britain and the Commons, my new friend on the faculty and Bard’s first radical-left senior appointment, fourteen years after mine and now facing hounding out by his “colleagues” in the history and social studies departments, none of them remotely at his intellectual, moral, political or scholarly level. Linebaugh had been to see our President to explore this dilemma, was treated in its course to one of Botstein’s logghoriac outbursts, and wanted to tell me about it. “Leon’s really down on you, Joel, he ranted on about how out of touch you were, how you lacked the ability to see nuances, how shoddy your scholarship was... I think there’s trouble ahead.”

Well, yes—but what would it be about? It was the Spring of 2002. I had just published my study of capitalism and ecology, *The Enemy of Nature*. And I was hard at work on the first of my anti-Zionist writings, “Zionism’s Bad Conscience,” whose release in *Tikkun* magazine that Fall would bring down the first of the blows destined to remove me from the Bard faculty. Botstein’s signature on a newspaper ad supporting Israel in the time of the Second Intifada had confirmed my suspicion that he was an ardent Zionist. The Second Intifada also happened to be the moment when a longstanding hostility to Israel—antedating by years my Bard career—turned into a resolve to stop merely having anti-Zionist views and to start doing something to implement them. Once I turned this corner, there was no turning back. A collision was inevitable.

But the conversation reported by Peter Linebaugh took place months before I had actually done anything publicly of anti-Zionist significance. I had published nothing along these lines except an obscure anthropology article in 1982 and some pages in my *History and Spirit* of 1991, a work that had actually been well-received on campus. I had taught no anti-Zionist courses, made no anti-Zionist speeches—and yet Botstein had clearly signaled an intention of getting rid of me.

The most coherent explanation was that this stemmed from the other side of my work, which though less overwrought than the Zionist issue, was no less threatening to Botstein’s ambitions. I made no bones about my views in the just-published *Enemy of Nature*, whose subtitle reads, “The end of capitalism or the end of the world?” I had spoken often about the subject, and had frequently taught a course at Bard on the ecological crisis, in which the whole capitalist system was indicted. And I developed this with a firm belief that capitalism is far more than an economic arrangement but extends deeply into civil society and its institutions such as academia. There is a more general point here, or rather, two:

From my side, I had simply become an all-purpose heretic; and whether I violated the basic taboo against going too far in one’s critique of capitalism by holding it to be an incorrigible destroyer of nature; or whether the limit was exceeded in

respect to the Zionist State of Israel, seeing it as an incorrigible, racist destroyer of humanity, Palestinians in particular, I had in either case triggered the vengeance of the inquisitor. I had gone too far, a distance that was the product of both sides of my project, and had to be expelled.

From the side of the institution, we need to appreciate how a liberal façade can conceal persecutory vengeance, whose menace increases to the degree that imperial power is engaged and/or threatened. Zionism is a prime breeding ground for this pestilence. Bard's accession into the ranks of the national security state, far from being separate from its Zionism, augments Zionism's violence, and is itself given direction and legitimation by Zionism. It is the same motion that turned the *Yishuv* settlement in Palestine, with its socialistic dreaming, into a hard exterminator once the germ of a state apparatus had been achieved. An observer of the massive infiltration of Zionists into the security apparatus of recent US administrations can reach the same conclusion. This is what über-Zionist—and Bard trustee—Martin Peretz calls the “Jewish restoration” (Kovel: 2007: 245).³ It is the Jew as Power-Jew, releasing centuries of hatred over being the Goyim's Bondsman—a hatred freely dispensed to Jewish heretics, those designated as the “self-hating” ones. And the persecution of heretics, in all such cases, plays a fundamental role in realizing the totalitarian potentials within an institution.

This was, I believe, the fire that flashed in Leon Botstein's eyes that autumn day in 2002 when, three weeks after the appearance of “Zionism's Bad Conscience,” he called me into his office and sententiously announced that owing to the decision of Hiss's family (Alger having died at age 93 in 1996) to spread the Chair around a bit and make it less political, I was no longer the Hiss Professor at Bard. Leon tried to keep to this line, but his logorrhea took over as he stated that this decision had nothing to do with my anti-Zionism, then suddenly blurted the *non sequitur*, that of course he was a Zionist, and a proud one to boot, for did the Jews not have the same right as any people to their own homeland? “If the French people could have France,” he went on, “then why should not the Jews have Israel?” He didn't wait for an answer, nor did I try to provide one. I was stunned and in misery, looking ahead to a long and painful dénouement to my Bard career.⁴

A Long End-Game

A great deal transpired in the almost seven years between being severed, first, from the Hiss chair and, finally, from the institution that gave it to me. As expected, it was painful, though this was mitigated by negotiating a halftime contract which enabled me to work one semester on, one semester off in lieu of being forced to resign, as I had been asked to do. But the benefits of escaping the intense degree

of alienation I experienced on campus were themselves somewhat neutralized by the further alienation ensuing from my long absences.

During this period, Bard solidified its ties with Israel, the United States security apparatus and international educational networks. Leon Botstein took over the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra and became a kind of cultural official of the Jewish State; he now makes, by his own admission, about ten trips a year to Israel. Early in 2006, when I was in South Africa on leave, Botstein brought the Jerusalem orchestra to Bard for a gala concert. This began with the playing of the Israeli and United States national anthems in sequence, following each with a rising of the audience in the great concert hall built on campus under his tutelage. When I returned I gave a public lecture calling attention to the ominous implications of this. It was attended by only one faculty member, the rest being students and people from the community, and the sense of chill I felt on campus increased. At my last meeting with Leon in 2009, (see below) he was still bitterly reproaching me for casting aspersions on this concert.

However, these years were also the busiest and most gratifying of my work life, owing to the activity around the ecological project (which came to be called "ecosocialism") and the further development of the anti-Zionist project, especially with the appearance of my book, *Overcoming Zionism* (Pluto Press), published in 2007. By now I was expressly arguing for a "single state" resolution of the Palestine crisis, on the ground that Israel was a structurally racist state on the scale of Apartheid South Africa, and deserving of the same fate.

Overcoming Zionism was met with resounding silence from all quarters of the aboveground world, but enjoyed a lively existence below the surface, so much so that the operatives of what we came to call the Zionist Thought Police had to resort to more extreme measures in order to make it go away. All stops were pulled and a series of broadsides became directed at its United States distributor, the University of Michigan Press, in mid-2007. These involved active participation of Right-wing Christian Zionist networks, and pressure upon the Governor of Michigan. Early in August, Philip Pochoda, Director of the University of Michigan Press, who had promised a robust defense of my rights of expression, completely folded and, calling the book "hate speech," withdrew it from circulation, effectively banning it in the United States and in the process violating the contract with Pluto and all standards of freedom of expression. A furious response ensued, the chief feature of which was to put pressure on the administration of the U of M. Eventually *Overcoming Zionism* was restored to circulation, but at the cost of terminating Pluto's contract with the university and the virtual collapse of the university press (see: www.codz.org). There is more to be said about this; but for present purposes what stands out is that of the 650 letters supporting my case sent to the President of U of M, not one

was from that great defender of liberal values, the President of Bard. When I asked why this was so, Botstein replied that “we thought you could take care of yourself.”

This was bad enough. Worse was the realization that not one of the Bard faculty wrote in my support. This pattern was repeated in the final phase, early in 2009, when my contract was expiring and the final push to oust me took place through non-renewal. Again, there was a great outcry from the community and from students present and past; again hundreds of letters of support; and again, zero solidarity from the mainstream faculty, erstwhile friends who had once hailed me as the “conscience of Bard,” but showed in a crisis the malleability of suitably intimidated intellectuals.⁵

In this last phase, there was little space for resistance at my end, as getting my job back would have been tantamount to a prison term. I chiefly desired a graceful departure and had taken measures to obtain this, but was met with a brutal and curt letter of dismissal, as though a pink slip telling me to leave my badge at the door as I exited. I took these to be fighting words.

The ensuing campaign was centered around deconstructing the college’s allegations as to why I had to go, challenging their construction of the case, and demonstrating the core political issues driving the process. Bard claimed economic hardship and my declining usefulness as the prime reasons for sacking me. I countered, first:

- That money could not have been the issue since Bard never made any good faith effort to talk with me to see what I wanted and how we could work something out. I had asked for no more. It could and should have done so given my 21 years of service at the upper level of the faculty. Second:
- That I had *de facto* tenure, as I had often been told in the past, owing to a series of renewed contracts, some for as long as five years. Third:
- That the procedure had been greatly flawed, directly violating the Faculty Handbook guidelines as well as elementary justice by installing at the head of the three-man evaluating committee, Rev. Bruce Chilton, campus chaplain, and a demonstrably hard-line Zionist who had supported Israel’s assault against Gaza on national radio as an instance of “Just War” theory. And fourth:
- That the core of the charge of declining usefulness (i.e. incipient senility) were student evaluations of highly questionable character. Indeed based upon statements made by students close to the matter, a charge of cherry-picking and even tampering with these evaluations could have been made.

My basic position was upheld by evaluations of the Mideast Studies Association, the journal of the CUNY Graduate Center, and the national American Association of University Professors (AAUP). Remarkably but all too predictably, the local chapter of AAUP, our faculty union, upheld the views of the administration. Ultimately, all

of the institutional voices in my favor were toothless, the case of the faculty union being particularly disgraceful.

Having no desire for the pyrrhic victory of a lawsuit alleging defamation of character, and having reached the place of detaching myself emotionally from the college and looking ahead to life beyond academia, I stopped here. Only one matter remained: a last meeting with lugubrious how-could-you-have-done-this-to-us-Joel? Leon Botstein, followed by a final legal *pas de deux*. I was given the option of being the “Distinguished Emeritus Professor at Bard,” which allowed me gym and library privileges in perpetuity, to attend lectures, and to have the right to apply for “grants” later on. In return, all I had to do was to refuse to ever mention this matter until the end of time... oh, and by the way, take all measures to remove all traces of it from the internet—rather like being asked after urinating into the ocean to remove all traces of the act from the waters. In other words, a deal the acceptance of which would have precluded writing this article. More generally, it would have signified a legitimization of the efforts to silence me.

One last point. There is one issue which more than any other, defined Bard’s need to extrude me from the faculty at this time: the Soros-funded liaison between Bard and Al-Quds University in East Jerusalem, Sari Nussibieh and Leon Botstein, Co-Directors. How I was scolded for my bad attitude toward this “lighting of a candle in the darkness,” this bringing of advanced Western values like tolerance to our Arab subjects and reconciling them to their condition with a good dose of the Humanities—even planning workshops so that the Palestinian faculty can become more “open-minded.” I’m sure they knew that I would keep on saying that soft, progressive Zionism is still Zionism, still racism, and still colonialism. Nowadays Botstein is catching flak from the Zionist Right for his Al-Quds project and allowing students to take part in the International Solidarity Movement. They are bound to grumble, but need not worry. For modern imperialism cannot do without its liberals.

Notes

1. A recent—and privately published—study of the Hiss case that arrives at similar conclusions is James V. Hamilton, MD, *The Hiss Case Reconsidered* (2010). Copies are available from the author, at 2315 F, Calle Camarico; Santa Fe, NM 87505.
2. I was startled to see, during a leave of absence, that my office was occupied by Walter Russell Mead, a neoconservative and Henry Kissinger Fellow at the Council for Foreign Relations. Mead, by the way, now occupies the Luce Chair once held by James Chace.
3. This is presumptively connected to my own case, though I have no direct evidence. I singled Peretz out for critique in *Overcoming Zionism*, chiefly for his response to the murder of Rachel Corrie by an Israel Defense Forces bulldozer in March 2003, though I did not call attention to his association with Bard.
4. It is no surprise that Botstein denies having said this and indeed everything that puts him in the light of having acted so as to force me out of Bard. In this regard he has called me a liar on several occasions. The reader will have to form his or her judgment as to who is lying. A certain amount of

documentation exists at www.codz.org, including a statement I released as to the facts of the matter; and there is more in my personal files, including a number of colorful statements that Botstein committed to writing. On a related matter, that of the Hiss Chair, it took Bard five years to fill it. The choice was shocking: Jonathan Brent, of the Yale University Press, an overt anticommunist, who has stated openly that he believes Hiss to be guilty. Why Brent would accept such a post, and why Botstein, Hiss's supposedly loyal defender, would offer it to him, beggars the imagination.

5. In 2009, Botstein spoke at length (in my absence) at a faculty meeting about my selfishness in resisting the sacking, which was explained strictly because of the financial crisis besetting the plucky and penurious little college. He also released a number of related statements over the next couple of months. The faculty silence in 2007 is harder to explain; but it must entail the relentless de-politicization and rightward draft to which the school had been exposed over the years—in short, an extension of the alienation intrinsic to academia.

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