



ILL# \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTICE**

**This material may be protected  
by copyright law (Title 17 U.S. Code).**

Please contact us if you require a resend.

University at Buffalo Libraries ♦ InterLibrary Loan, Lending

234 Lockwood Library ♦ Buffalo, NY 14260

(716) 645-2812 ♦ [buflend@buffalo.edu](mailto:buflend@buffalo.edu)

# Tenure allows best professors to succeed without resentment

By GERHARD FALK



Academic tenure permits a professor or teacher to hold his job until retirement or for life. This arrangement has come under considerable criticism in recent months on the grounds that it tends to protect incompetent faculty from losing their jobs.

While this criticism is sometimes valid, it overlooks that tenure protects the best and most productive faculty from resentment against achievement.

A professor is eligible for tenure after having been employed for seven years. During that time he is expected to do a good job teaching and, normally, is also expected to publish scholarly articles or books. At the conclusion of six years, the candidate for tenure is reviewed by a committee of his peers, i.e., fellow faculty who then recommend to the administration whether to grant the candidate a lifetime appointment. If tenure is refused, the professor can stay one more year and is then "fired."

Theoretically, this would ensure that only the best are appointed. However, faculty committees generally include only faculty politicians, who staff almost all of the committees.

These faculty politicians seldom find time to do any research or write anything themselves and are therefore worried lest a truly outstanding scholar/teacher be given tenure.

Consequently, the untenured must walk a fine line between doing too little to satisfy the reviewing committees and administrators or doing so much that the faculty committees will resent their superior ability and refuse to recommend tenure. A candidate who has been refused by a committee is seldom, if ever, given tenure by administrators.

All this means that only the tenured can truly develop into superior teachers and productive scholars since they cannot be fired by those who resent their competence. Lower-ranking yet tenured professors who seek promotion to "full" professor face the same problems in this respect. Therefore, the best work done in any university or college is done by tenured, full professors who are free to publish, teach and produce without worrying about the committee professionals and other self-appointed elitists who dominate almost every campus.

Today, almost the entire academic establishment is dominated by those who demand conformity at any price. In fact, rigid conformity and puritanical thinking are the principal characteristics of the academic world, so that there is hardly any room for individualism anywhere in our institutions of higher learning. Those who express views not to the liking of campus politicians are either deprived of their jobs, denied promotions or excluded from faculty activities.

As a result, large numbers of faculty no longer attend any meetings, refuse to serve on committees or fear teaching subject matter not "politically correct." That phrase refers to the belief that some thoughts should not be expressed, some ideas not exhibited, some books not written and some forms of expression not spoken. "Political correctness" is just one more form of tyranny among the many that have plagued mankind. It is, however, most egregious that the academy is now "goose stepping" to the campus "thought police."

For example, it is currently almost impossible for a graduate student in psychology to follow the teachings of Sigmund Freud. Freud is "politically incorrect." Similarly, a graduate student in sociology would not dare express an interest in the work of Pitirim Sorokin. He, too, is out. In history, the tyranny is so bad that a young Harvard historian, Daniel Goldhagen, was greeted with a barrage of criticism amounting to personal attacks because he dared to write a book whose views differ from the standard opinions of established historians.

These examples and many others could cite demonstrate the need for tenure in higher education lest the most productive scholars and best teachers become the victims of rigid and narrow conformists, to the detriment of students and freedom alike.

GERHARD FALK is the author of "The Life of the Academic Professional in America" and seven other books. He has also written extensively in journals dealing with higher education and other areas in the social sciences.

For writer guidelines for columns, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Opinion Pages Guidelines, The Buffalo News, P.O. Box 100, Buffalo, N.Y. 14240.

## AUSTIN AMERICAN-STATESMAN

### Texas should replace death penalty with life imprisonment

Texas leads the nation in the number of executions, yet can't seem to execute inmates quickly enough to free space for new prisoners. There are fundamental flaws with our state criminal-justice system.

A proposal to expand death row because of crowding highlights the state's unjust use of the death penalty and the urgent need to replace it with life without parole.

The death penalty is fraught with problems — from the casual and secretive clemency review process to

the often incompetent legal representation offered death-row inmates.

No one is arguing that convicted murderers should not face punishment. But the state's reckless use of the death penalty fails to acknowledge that judges, juries and prosecutors make errors.

The Texas Legislature should end this brutal and unfair practice. The fact that death row is overcrowded proves that the death penalty isn't the crime deterrent supporters claim it is.

## THE BUFFALO NEWS

EDWARD H. BUTLER  
Founder 1880-1914

EDWARD H. BUTLER, JR.  
Publisher 1914-1956

JAMES H. RIGHTER  
Publisher 1956-1971

WARREN T. COLVILLE  
Executive Vice President

ROBERT J. CASSELL  
Senior Vice President of Operations

SCOTT H. BROOKS  
Vice President and Advertising Director

PAUL GLAISER

Clinton has gotten a bad rap. Heck, he got himself into something else entirely. Some months back, a political cartoonist captured that something else in a drawing that pictured special prosecutor Kenneth

Consider: He splattered marks on his legacy. He marked himself plainly and explicitly and a cheat. He hurt himself more widely and foundly than anybody

# Blaming Starr would

Never have so many made so much of so little. Bottom line: There is no impeachment case against President Clinton — never was and never will be.

According to Monica Lewinsky, testifying for the 25th time, lying in her deposition in the Paula Jones case was her own idea, because she considered her affair none of anybody else's business. She was not promised a job or anything else, nor was help in getting the job a reward for her deposition. She got help because she, in her words, made a pest of herself.

Which is not to say that Clinton didn't lie in his deposition in the Jones case; he most demonstrably did. However, it was not precisely that count that the House declined to impeach him because, in the memorable words of one Republican, "That was an understandable effort to protect his wife and daughter."

Of course, perjury is not trivial, but since 1) the perjury was committed during immaterial testimony in a case that was dismissed by the judge as baseless; 2) the case was brought by his political enemies to begin with; and 3) the perjury was not designed to conceal illegal conduct, I think Clinton should have been treated like any other citizen caught in such an act of folly. In other words, he should have gotten a slap on the wrist.

When Mark Fuhrman committed perjury in the middle of a major murder trial, he was fined \$200. So Clinton should have been fined, say, \$100, his political foes could have held him up to moral obloquy forevermore, and the rest of us could have gotten on with business.

Anyone who thinks Clinton "got away" with something in this case because he's president should understand that no one has ever been treated like this for perjury in a civil suit. If Clinton had been Joe Doaks, he would have been done with this more than a year ago. Only because he is president and has relentless enemies has he been subjected to this extraordinary legal harassment.

From the beginning, the public has said it did not want to know about Clinton's sex life, did not need to know about Clinton's sex life and considers Clinton's sex life none of our business. How it ever got to be the subject of this insane legal pro-



MOLLY IVINS

he was an office of the proce

And are still of them ing wast of noth about th ing to co coherent selves in enough, out this

The n ceeding i House r courts, of tell you soulder Dale Bur

This e that can has been now enga this mess too woul their per rather th at his do need to used by K Fort Wor

# Clinton's version of vooc

We have grown accustomed to the president's proposing programs of mind-boggling complexity. But not since Clinton's ill-fated health-care plan in 1993 have we seen anything quite so baffling and deceptive as his proposal for budget surpluses. The president has taken a good idea — using the surpluses to repay federal debt — and, through a misleading accounting device, converted it into a bad idea: a scheme to protect and expand government benefits for the elderly at the expense of tomorrow's workers.

"The notion that the federal government's sole purpose is to support the consumption of the baby boom in retirement is silly and outrageous," says economist Eugene Steuerle of the Urban Institute. But this is, with only slight exaggeration, Clinton's vision. The administration expects taxes to remain near historic records, while non-retirement spending (from Head Start to defense) continuously shrinks as a share of the total. By 2020, the share of Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid — the main programs for the elderly — could easily rise by 50 percent.

Indeed, the administration's projections could be conservative, because they don't include proposed new retirement benefits. The president wants Medicare to cover prescription drugs and Social Security to expand benefits for widows. Informally, the administration estimates the drug benefit alone to cost \$10 billion to \$15 billion annually.

The full implications of the Clinton plan have escaped much of the press and Congress, because it is so bewildering. It helps to untangle the accounting. What you find is that Clinton is (as critics charge) double counting much of the surplus and, worse, creating \$2.7 trillion in "funny money" — funds that don't exist and whose purpose is to force future Congresses and presidents to favor retirees over workers.

Consider how the Clinton program would operate (Social Security) (Social Security) (Social Security)



ROBERT SAMUELSON

trust fund care trust from? Now arithmetic. actual surp sion of the lion of T fund get-tion," says

Over 15 of "donatit mitting nor of the cost ture worke

Natural it's stifling needs of to it says that care drug) (savings. WH press brief cut, Treasu "They're to to get out -Exactly. ion who sti advantages