

# Heimlich, Finley Committee Slow To Come To Decision

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Remember the fabled race between the tortoise and the hare?

Public opinion, cast in the role of the slower but steadier tortoise, is winning the race with the faculty review committee in coming to a decision on the Heimlich, Finley case.

The committee had, and continues to have, all the advantages. It possesses the complete record of testimony before the original Board of Review and the Senate sub-committee. It has the admonition of the original board to act swiftly in the interests of both the professors and the University.

Yet what has happened? The investigations, designed to present the Board of Trustees with information and advice for a final decision, have dragged on for a month. They were made secret to avoid prejudgment of the case. With every advantage on its side the committee is progressing too slowly.

Meanwhile, the tortoise, or public opinion, ill-informed and without the facts, capable only of conjecture, has won the race and come to a decision. A sizeable proportion believes the professors innocent. They have heard of Heimlich and Finley's teaching ability and believe they are fully capable. They have seen no proof of Communistic affiliation.

Another section of the uninformed public has decided the two men are guilty of everything from subversion to sedition. "They are Communists," say this segment of the public and end the discussion with that. They find Heimlich and Finley unfit to teach.

The third, and by far the largest, bloc of the public has no definite opinion. Its decision is that the matter is of relative unimportance.

These three climates of thoughts are due to the secrecy of the committee's meetings. The fear of prejudgment no longer holds water as an argument. Prejudgment has been made when newspapers can assume the guilt or innocence of two men, when the public has decided on the problem.

It would have been far better to publicize the testimony put before the committee. It is vital that a decision be reached immediately. Academic freedom, the reputation of the University and the future of two men are at stake.

One of the worst results of the blanket of secrecy placed on the deliberations of the committee of review is the relatively large number of persons who have no opinion on the case though the results will be far reaching in this University society.

The problem is not whether Heimlich and Finley are or were members of the Communist Party. The question under consideration is whether their refusal to testify before the Senate subcommittee makes the men unfit to teach at Rutgers.

The American Association of University Professors and the local teachers' union of the CIO unofficially have come out in defense of the men. They realize that the removal of Heimlich and Finley from the faculty for the above reasons would be contrary to American principles. It would place a penalty on the exercise of constitutionally guaranteed rights.