

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION

PHILIP H. RHINELANDER (1908 – 1987)

Philip H. Rhineland, Olive H. Palmer Professor of Humanities emeritus, died on March 1987, at the age of 79. He came to Stanford as Dean of the School of Humanities and Sciences, and as Professor of Philosophy, in 1956. In 1961 he withdrew from the deanship as Professor of Philosophy and Humanities, and became emeritus in 1973; but almost to the end of his life he accepted Stanford's entreaties that he continue to teach his outstanding courses in ethics and in the philosophy of law. He is survived by his wife, Virginia, whom he married in 1932; two brothers, Frederic W. of San Clemente, California, and Laurens H. of Charlottesville, Virginia; a son, Philip M., of Portland, Maine; three daughters: Helen R. Thompson, of Cambridge, Massachusetts. Jane R. Todd, of Rome, Italy; and Virginia R. Edelen of Bloomington, Indiana; and 13 grandchildren.

Rhineland was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, on January 1, 1908. He was educated at Harvard, where he obtained the A.B. (summa cum laude) in Classics and Philosophy in 1929, studying with the philosopher Alfred North Whitehead. Rhineland then entered the Harvard Law School, attaining the LLB in 1932. He practiced law for eight years, doing appellate trial work with the Boston firm of Choate, Hall and Stewart. As a Naval Reservist, he was called to active duty, 1941-1945, reaching the rank of Lt. Commander. These experiences no doubt shaped his later teaching interests in philosophy and the humanities, philosophy of law, and the applications of ethics to law, international relations, war, and military service. Following World War II, he returned to Harvard to work for the Ph.D. in Philosophy, 1115 years late," he once said, and received the degree in 1949.

Harvard wisely retained him. After getting the doctorate and until his departure for Stanford, he taught philosophy at Harvard, and it was there that the course for which he was to be famous here, "Problems of Good and Evil" (Humanities 4 at Harvard, Philosophy 6 at Stanford) was first offered. In 1952 Harvard made him Director of General Education and Chairman of the Committee on General Education.

At Stanford, from the first Rhineland was active in many capacities. Always teaching in addition to his administrative duties, he offered courses in the Humanities Special Program and in the Values, Technology, Science and Society Program as well as in the Philosophy Department. At various times he served on the Executive Committee of the Academic Council, the Committee on University Policy, the Committee on Student Affairs, the Committee on Undergraduate Education, and the Inter-Fraternity Board. He was also acting director of the Hoover Institution briefly, between the directorships of Rothwell and Campbell, in 1959.

In the 1960s he was active as Chairman of the Committee of Fifteen, dealing with the developing difficulties of the years of student protest. As chairman of the Student Conduct Legislative Council, Rhineland spearheaded efforts in the mid-1970s that strengthened the University's Honor Code. He also was a member of the drafting committee for the Program in Values, Technology, Science and Society.

Rhineland's deanship coincided with one of the most important periods of the expansion of the Stanford faculty. One colleague in the dean's office during those years has said of him, "I still remember the care with which he would listen to the statement of needs from any of the departments in Humanities and Sciences. Rhineland had a style and a manner that

immediately communicated an effort to be supportive and helpful." He pursued a policy of strengthening weak departments, and contributed significantly to Stanford's development at this time. All will remember his humility, and his often quoted remark as dean that "the best administrator is a reluctant administrator."

From the first, Rhinelander was deeply committed to the increasingly interdisciplinary approach to philosophy that has come to characterize the discipline at Stanford and elsewhere in recent years. Quoting his own teacher Whitehead, he urged his students "to seek simplicity but distrust it." In a 1984 interview, he applauded a return in philosophy to practical issues: "The tide is turning," he said. "I have always talked about practical ethics, that is, applied ethics. That was very much on the back burner until quite recently." These persuasions have informed all of Rhinelander's teaching and writing: not only his "Problems of Good and Evil," but also a popular course, "Moral Dilemmas of War and Peace," that he developed in 1983-84 with a one-time student, retired admiral James Stockdale, now a senior fellow in the Hoover Institution, who has credited Rhinelander's teaching with enabling him to survive eight years as a prisoner of war in Vietnam. In addition to Rhinelander's articles in various publications, including law reviews, his book, Is Man Incomprehensible to Man?, was published by Freeman in 1973. He and Stockdale together had been writing another, tentatively titled Conflict and Character.

Rhinelander has repeatedly won honors within and outside our university. A member of Phi Beta Kappa, he was chosen as the Phi Beta Kappa Lecturer (lecturing in various institutions) for 1970-71. He was a scholar in residence in the American Academy of Rome in the winter and spring of 1964, and took his course "Problems of Good and Evil" to the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island in the spring of 1980. In 1963, Stanford gave him the Lloyd W. Dinkelspiel Award, the University's highest faculty honor for distinguished service to undergraduate education; and in 1972 he was named Olive H. Palmer Professor of Humanities. In 1977 he was awarded an honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity by the Church Divinity School of the Pacific in Berkeley.

Continuing the religious commitments of his father, Bishop Philip M. Rhinelander (Episcopalian), Philip H. Rhinelander at his death had been for a number of years chairman of the Board of the York School, an Episcopal secondary school in Monterey. He also served on the Standing Committee of the Diocese of California. A man of gentle wit, he followed baseball with enthusiasm, but also enjoyed an occasional quiet game of chess. One of his avocations was composing musical plays (for a private club in Boston), and also choral music, some of it religious, some of it setting to music favorite Latin poems by Horace. A Christmas carol by Rhinelander was later sung by the Stanford Chorale. His "Santé" was sung at his funeral (in Christ Church, Portola Valley, on March 24th): ". . . The sands of time run on / Yet here we stand, now - -/ Soon to depart to face the final Doubt "

His department colleagues in Philosophy will remember these things; but they will first think of him as "our elder statesman," as one put it, and as "one of our last really distinguished undergraduate teachers." All, colleagues and students, will remember what he most wanted us to remember: his conviction that moral philosophy is and must be something that really matters in human life.

David S. Nivison, Chair
John D. Goheen
Patrick Suppes