

Angela Davis Firing May Blacklist UC

By Carl Irving
Education Writer

The University of California faces a critical review next week by the nation's leading association of professors, and the outcome could affect its reputation for years to come.

It involves Angela Davis, whom the UC regents are accused of firing without due process while she was teaching philosophy at UCLA.

This took place before the Marin County shootout and subsequent charges against Miss Davis of murder, kidnapping and conspiracy; but after Miss Davis let it be known she was a member of the Communist party.

The American Association of University Professors, composed of 100,000 teachers and research scholars on 1400 campuses, has the Davis matter on the agenda for its annual meeting in New Orleans next week. It is considered likely that the AAUP will vote to censure UC.

Select Group

The last time that happened to a top-ranking university was in 1963, involving the University of Illinois. If it happens next week, UC would join a small list of institutions now under censure, including Oklahoma State University, the University of Florida, Texas A&M and the University of Mississippi.

In the academic world, censure is considered to be damaging to an institution because it affects its ability to hire top professors and administrators.

"It is the most profound kind of punishment a univer-

sity can suffer in the professional world," one informed source said.

It was learned that the chairman of the regents, William French Smith, and the UC president, Charles J. Hitch, have declined to submit arguments to the AAUP committee on academic freedom and tenure, which takes up the Davis issue first next week.

Professors

The committee, which includes leading professors from Harvard, Yale, Duke, and the University of Wisconsin, will submit its recommendations to the AAUP council and general meeting a day later.

These would be humiliating moves for a great university, and reactions by the regents and others might be bitter in return. Smith and other regents already have been strongly critical of the preliminary AAUP report which raised the issue.

An inquiry by an AAUP subcommittee had reported that the regents had twisted the meaning of AAUP rules for faculty behavior in order to excuse their action discharging Miss Davis.

'Calamity'

Smith and former chairman DeWitt A. Higgs said last fall that that report contained "evident pervasive bias." AAUP spokesmen reacted in kind, charging that the two regents showed a "dubious effort to avoid coming to terms with the calamity their actions have brought to the University of California."

Smith and Higgs had concluded that Miss Davis made public speeches "so extreme, so antithetical to

the protection of academic freedom and so obviously deliberately false in several respects as to be inconsistent with . . . appointment to the faculty . . ."

The preliminary AAUP report concluded that Miss Davis, now 28, was fired in the spring of 1970 partly because of her Communist affiliations. It also claimed the regents failed to find Miss Davis was unfit to teach, and that they did not let her have a chance to defend herself.

Tenure

The regents have contended there was no need for due process in her case because

it involved reappointment of an acting professor with no tenure. But the AAUP contends that reappointment for a second year to the faculty is almost always automatic at UC.

The AAUP report which is to be considered next week, however, goes beyond Miss

Davis. It claims that the regents have been confronting the faculty as an adversary. It adds that the regents have not shown independence of political pressures, as intended by constitutional guarantees for UC and the 16-year terms of the majority board.