Response to Levin and Shultz

Paul D. Carrington

The two responses to my brief narrative are distractions. I ask readers to note that neither questions except in minor detail the accuracy of the account. I stand by my stated aim of leaving it to the reader to draw any appropriate inferences from the event without extended argument from me. I advance my interpretations only as may be needed to enable the reader to know through whose eyes the narrative is told.

Betsy Levin refers to what she describes as misstatements in my account. If there are inaccuracies in my account, they are entirely due to the veil of secrecy thrown over the committee's actions by its members. My account of the event in Phoenix is based on telephone conversations with a majority of the persons in the room at the time the decision was made. I have also circulated various drafts of my account to all those present, urging that any inaccuracy be corrected. In the light of these conversations and others with members of the Boalt site inspection team, the accreditation committee, and other officers of the AALS past and present, I am confident that the picture revealed in my account is essentially correct. That tends to be confirmed not only by Levin's slightly different account but also by the account of Thomas Morgan, the AALS president who initially responded in writing to my account and later withdrew his response.¹

The reader may infer from my persistence in this matter that I regard the problem not as a momentary lapse by the executive committee; rather, I fear continuing trespass on the limits of the association's role and the committee's knowledge of member schools. I am informed but cannot confirm from my own knowledge that the committee has imposed its disapproving comments on a majority of the schools reviewed in the last year, and that the information on which such disapprovals have been expressed is in a number of cases less substantial than in the case that is the subject of my account. Although the executive committee has not authorized Levin to inform us of the frequency of its disapprovals for insufficient diversity or the factual bases on which they are issued, I think that readers of this journal are entitled to that information.

Levin finds in my record set forth in footnote 8 evidence of a purpose to challenge the accreditation function of the AALS. As I acknowledged, I am opposed to overregulation. That, however, is not the issue I mean to raise by my account of the Boalt Affair. My purpose is to attack conduct by the executive committee that is insufficiently founded in fact, is harmful to member schools, and reflects a disposition to misuse the meager power conferred upon it by the accreditation process. Levin's defense of accreditation standards is beside the point.

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¹ For any readers wishing to evaluate the Boalt report in the light of Levin's account, I will provide a copy of the full text.
Marjorie Shultz is, by my lights, intrusive. She wishes to defend herself against an attack I have not made. She is angry that I did not ask from her personal information that I had no right to receive, would have had no means to evaluate if I had received it, and that was irrelevant to the issue I wished to raise. I apologize for any slight she may have received. It was quite unintended. She is also displeased with my reference to secular Calvinism. Some readers may discern in her tone evidence to confirm its existence. I do not, however, choose at this time to debate PC with M. S. I thought that I had something to say on that subject last year, but I have been fully preempted by events as well as the words of others and find my views still too unstable to set in print. She will for the time being have to debate PC with someone else. The reader perhaps?