

April 28, 1975

Dear José,

Thank you for that telephone conference. It helped to prepare me for what I did face. That was a threat all right, but it didn't take the form I had anticipated. It was more subtle in a way –it was couched in amiable language. But it was direct enough. The student in question has, in courses other than mine, 2 B's and 2 C's; he is here on a scholarship provided by his government (Persian); I was in effect told to pass him – indeed, I think, to give him a "C". The best defense I could maintain was to pretend to hear no threat. And your mood of reasonableness had helped to get me into a mood in which I could simulate such high reasonableness. When you are in such a mood, you do not hear the smiling freshman dean make a threat, right? You rather seem to hear that smiling freshman dean ask your serious judgment about a student about whom you have the right to make a serious judgment. That is what I seemed to hear; and I gave the judgment.

But I was told to confer with a woman in English who's been trying to help him. Quite obviously, she will be assigned to help me. I shall take my good time in finding her. What was an issue –this was transparent to me –was not the welfare of the student. (And here at Fairfield univ. the genuine intellectual prowess of the student is never an issue, because nobody has any conception of such a thing.) It was that the Persian government has supplied funds to Fairfield for this young man ("he will become a leader in his own country", the dean remarked); and Fairfield has got to produce. Therefore I've got to.

Incidentally, the man inquired in passing about my two other foreign students. That, though a lot of work I've done with them, they are now doing creditable work –well, he was only wildly interested. His concern was to satisfy that government -he told me that he'd written strong letters to the government officials urging that the young man retain his scholarship, reporting that he'd made good progress. I am simply in his way.

I found some more notions in me about the theory of Recollection. I wrote them down before they flitted away. I'll write you a note about them in a few days, if I may, or else tell you of them during the summer. I think they do all make sense.

Thank you again for your help to me.

Sincerely,  
[Signatura]