

Appendix O

**Professor Bing's letters of 12 December and 2 April 2000
to Professor Middleton, Deputy Chairperson,
Postgraduate Studies Committee**

Professor Sue Middleton,
Deputy Chair Postgraduate Studies Committee,
University of Waikato

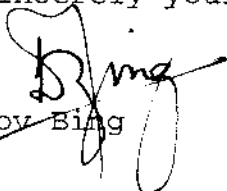
12 December 1999

Dear Sue,

Enclosed please find a letter dated 26 November 1999 addressed to the FASS Human Ethics Committee. That Committee referred the letter to the University's Human Ethics Committee. The Chairperson of this Committee, Dr. Gunn decided that the issue raised in the letter was not within the terms of reference of the Committee. In his opinion the function of his Committee is 'only to look at research proposals, not at the candidate'. Since the issue raised in our letter has the issue of 'human ethics' as its central theme, the refusal of both the FASS Human Ethics Committee and the University's Human Ethics Committee to deal with the matter seems to be a rather disingenuous.

Dr. Gunn suggested that the Postgraduate Studies Committee might perhaps be the appropriate committee. It would be appreciated if your Committee would deal with this matter at the earliest possible opportunity. We look forward to hear from your Committee.

Sincerely yours,


Doy Bing



Understanding people and their world

Professor Sue Middleton,
Deputy Chairperson Postgraduate Research Committee,
University of Waikato.

2 April 2000

Dear Professor Middleton,

Enclosed please find another copy of Mr. Franke's and my letter to the FASS Human Ethics Committee of 26 November 1999 in which we raised the question of the 'cultural safety' of Mr. Kupka's Doctoral topic.

As you are aware the FASS Human Ethics Committee; the University's Ethics Committee; the Postgraduate Research Committee have all argued that the human ethics issue which we raised 'falls between the cracks' procedurally. (Email Middleton to Bing) As you are aware you referred our letter of 26 November to Mr. Jeremy Callaghan, the Assistant Vice Chancellor who works in the Vice Chancellor's Office. Mr. Callaghan e-mailed Professor Bing letting him know that the issue raised by us was not his responsibility to deal with and he did not know why Professors Selby and Middleton had referred the issue to him. Even though our correspondence had been referred to the Vice Chancellor's Office, the latter later claimed in writing that the matter had not formally come to his attention.

At this stage Professor Bing was contacted by email by the Mediator Ms. Weir. She asked Professor Bing for advice how to proceed. Professor Bing recommended that she should advise the Vice Chancellor that he should instruct the Postgraduate Research Committee to table the letter of 26 November 1999 and deal with the issue of 'cultural safety'. Ms. Weir agreed with this recommendation and informed Professor Bing that the PGRC would now table and discuss the letter. Ms. Weir rang Professor Middleton in Professor Bing's presence to enquire about the outcome of the formal meeting of the PGRC. Unfortunately Professor Middleton was not in her office. The next day Professor Bing was informed by members of the PGRC that the letter of 26 November had not been tabled. It had been at the insistence of members of the PGRC that the issue of 'cultural safety' was discussed and it was decided to ask the FASS Human Ethics Committee for a report. Please remember that this was the Faculty Committee of which the Convenor had neither acknowledged, nor tabled the correspondence of 26 November. Frans Kafka is alive and well at the University of Waikato!

At this stage Professor Bing let it be known that he had lost confidence in the Mediator's handling of the matter and also in the Vice Chancellor's manner of responding to this issue. The Vice Chancellor responded that he had full confidence in the Mediator and that he himself was well satisfied with the progress of the Kupka saga. He noted that the issue had not formally reached his desk.

It is our contention that in ignoring our concern about the 'cultural safety' of the Kupka Doctoral proposal, the University is making us invisible and in a sense is treating us with contempt. Would the PGRC approve a doctoral project by a member of the Ku Klux Klan wanting to write a Doctorate on Maori sovereignty?

This whole issue has come about because Professor Oetli and Professor Knuferman as Chief Supervisor of the Kupka thesis, rejected the assessment of Mr. Norman Franke,

a Lecturer in the German Department and Professor Bing that Mr.Kupka's voluminous internet writings (well over 3000 pages) were Antisemitic, Neo Nazi, Racist and of a Holocaust Denial nature. At the time Professor Knuferman assured Mr.Franke and other members of the German staff that he would not support Kupka' Doctoral candidature if the serious allegations against him proved to be correct., especially because of the nature of the Kupka Doctoral proposal. Very recently, Professor Knuferman repeated this statement in writing to Professor Bing (see attached email Knuferman to Bing, 8 March 2000). Professors Oettli and Knuferman examined 150 pages of Kupka's internet writings submitted by Mr.Franke and declared Kupka's writings were somewhat rightwing, but certainly not Antisemitic, NeoNazi, Racist or Holocaust Denial. Consequently the PGRC were not informed about the concerns of Mr.Franke and Professor Bing and in this manner the PGRC approved Mr.Kupka's Doctoral proposal.

In the meantime Dr.Douglas Pratt, the chairperson of the Department of Religious Studies, having heard about the Kupka controversy, decided to take some independent advice on the Kupka internet writings. Two of his overseas colleagues, Professor John Moses of the University of Queensland and Ms.Luise Freudenberg of the University of Berlin independently examined the Kupka writings on the internet and concluded that they were clearly Antisemitic, NeoNazi and Holocaust Denial. Both scholars are specialists in Modern German History and possess an excellent knowledge of German. Professor Bing then approached two further senior scholars in Holocaust Studies, both being native speakers of German.

Professor Konrad Kwiet was Professor of German and Holocaust Studies at Macquary University and is now at the University of Sydney. He is Australia's top scholar in Holocaust Studies. Professor Peter Longerich is Director of the Institute of Holocaust Studies at the University of London. He recently testified, as one of Europe's top scholars in Holocaust Studies, for the defence in the infamous Irving/Lipstadt trial about Holocaust Denial in London. Both scholars indicated that Mr.Kupka's writings were clearly NeoNazi, Antisemitic and Holocaust Denial.

These reports were all made available to Professor Knuferman and the University. All four specialist reports have been ignored by both.

A third issue which deserves the attention of the Higher Degrees Committee is Mr.Kupka's academic record. Mr.Kupka came to us with a C/C+ average for his Arts degree from Massey. The level of entry into an MA programme of all German Departments in New Zealand is a B+. In exceptional circumstances a B average is allowed. Massey University rejected Mr.Kupka's entry into the MA programme. Professor Knuferman, for other than academic reasons, approved Mr.Kupka's entry into the MA in German at Waikato. Moreover, Mr.Kupka wrote a Dissertation (equivalent to two papers) and a Directed Research Project (equivalent to two papers). Both projects were allowed to be written in German and both the Dissertation and the Directed Research Project were not externally assessed.

It is a common practice at all New Zealand Universities to have graduate papers, but especially theses, dissertations and directed research projects, assessed by academics at another University. This practice is to ensure that academic standards be maintained. It is my view, therefore, that the assessment process of Mr.Kupka's Dissertation and his Directed Research Project has not been completed and the University should as yet, forward the research projects to an independent external assessor.

It should also be noted that Mr.Kupka applied for entry into the Political Science Doctoral programme. When meeting Mr.Kupka, I first enquired into his academic record. He wanted to write a thesis on 'Marxism in Germany'. I suggested he should talk to a colleague of mine who had specialized in this field. His response was that it appeared that Mr.Kupka had extreme right wing views and was not a suitable candidate to undertake such a project. I made some enquiries about his academic record. Noting his dismal C record and the lack of a Masterate thesis, we rejected Mr.Kupka on academic grounds.

Professor Knuferman could not find any other academic staff member in his Department who would agree to be a second supervisor for Mr.Kupka. All the academic staff in the German Department, to their credit, did not believe that Mr.Kupka was doctoral material. Professor Knuferman rejected the views of his colleagues and went outside the Department for a second supervisor. Professor Ray Harlow agreed to act.. Unfortunately Professor Knuferman did not brief Professor Harlow about the nature of Mr.Kupka's academic record and the views of the other academics in the German Department. When Professor Harlow learned about Mr.Kupka's academic record as well as his the nature of his internet postings, he resigned as second supervisor.

Another, third supervisor, Professor Hans-Christof Graf von Nayhauss of the Paedagogische Institute in Karlsruhe, accepted his position in good faith. Professor von Nayhauss has no idea about Mr.Kupka's NeoNazi and Holocaust Denial activities on the internet. These activities are unlawful in Germany. Late last year, Dr.Toben, from Adelaide, was sent to prison for 9 months in Germany for Holocaust denial activities on the internet. Surely, it is unethical and unprofessional not to brief an external supervisor about the background, both academic and otherwise, of a prospective student, especially if the activities the student is involved in are unlawful. The University of Waikato, having received four specialist reports on the nature of Mr.Kupka's postings, must be seen as being culpable in these matters.

According to Professor Knuferman, the Executive Committee of the PGRC, has appointed a further scholar from Germany onto the Kupka panel, to replace Professor Harlow. Has this person been briefed by Professor Knuferman and Professors Middleton and Selby before they approved this replacement appointment?

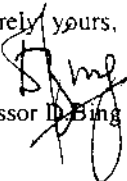
Summing up the University is requested:

- A) Firstly to deal with the 'cultural safety' of the Kupka Doctoral topic and we request that the PGRC, which accepted the Kupka proposal in the first place, deal with this question in full Committee. It must seem obvious that the new system of executive power in the PGRC has created considerable problems for the University.
- B) Secondly, we are requesting that the Dissertation and the Directed Research Project of Mr.Kupka be externally assessed. The external assessor should have no knowledge of the Kupka controversy and Professors Knuferman and Oetlli should have no involvement in this matter.
- C) Thirdly, we are requesting the University to take note of the four expert reports on Mr.Kupka's internet postings and the University should ask Professor Knuferman to do the same and implement his firm commitment to his own Department and Professor Bing of 8 March 2000 (i.e. 'I would not support Kupka's PhD candidature if the serious allegations against Kupka were proven to be correct').

We are sending copies of this correspondence to each member of the University Council, Because it is our view that there has been a serious brake-down in the management of the University. We do accept that following the advice from the Race Relations Conciliator's Office, the University cannot exclude Mr.Kupka on the basis of his political opinion. However, we have raised three other issues in this letter and it behooves the University to deal with them and not to treat us as if we are invisible

It should be noted that this correspondence originates following a meeting of the Jewish academic staff of the University; members of the Waikato/Bay of Plenty Jewish Association and the Jewish students. It was their unanimous view that the matter be formally raised with all members of the Postgraduate Research Committee and all members of the University Council. Our meeting lasted two hours.

Sincerely yours,


Professor D. Bing

cc.Members of the PGRC
Members of the University Council

Enclosures;

- A) Correspondence Bing/Franke to FASS Human Ethics Committee, 26 November
- B) Kupka internet posting translations
- C) Kupka Doctoral proposal
- D) Four reports by Holocaust Studies expert
- E) Knuferman/Bing e-mail 8 March 2000