

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

A special meeting of the Board of Regents was called in the office of Regent W. R. Wallace, Seventh and Broadway, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, at 3:30 p. m. Saturday, October 2, 1943, at the request of President Brandt.

The following members were present: Regent McBride, President of the Board, presiding; Regents Hopper, Wallace, Noble, Wimberly. Regent Don Emery was called over 'Long Distance' in Washington. He concurred in the actions of the Board at this meeting.

The Chair announced that the minutes of the last regular meeting would be considered at the next regular meeting.

The meeting was called to discuss the situation with reference to the Oklahoma Daily in which editorials and news items concerning the Army and Navy Training Programs have appeared in violation of Army and Navy contracts with the University and not in the best interests of the training program.

Captain John F. Donelson, Commanding Officer, Navy V-12 unit, appeared before the Board on this matter and the following communication to President Brandt was read:

"Norman, Oklahoma,
October 1, 1943.

Mr. Joseph A. Brandt, President,
University of Oklahoma,
Norman, Oklahoma.

Dear Mr. Brandt:

It is our understanding that in the existing University Set-up the contents of the Oklahoma Daily are not subject to censorship or control by you as to editorials, news, or other content.

Needless to say the Army and Navy trainee contracts are with the University -- the institution -- of which the Oklahoma Daily is a part.

The enclosed copies "A" and "B" of Navy Department letters definitely prescribe the method and procedure as regards publicity concerning the Navy program, and place a definite responsibility on you and the Commanding Officer. The same principle of press relations is inherent in the Army program.

Whereas there have been in the past numerous instances of publicity in the student paper which in our opinion affect adversely the

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morale and best interests of the institution, including uniformed trainees, there are enclosed herewith copies (extracts) of recent Oklahoma Daily contents which are incompatible with the routine operation and control of the military programs on the campus. Item "C" was not published with the knowledge, consent, or approval of any responsible authority; furthermore it is a falsification of fact in that the case was not announced by Naval Hospital authorities, nor was it published with their knowledge, consent, or approval. Item "D" is a flagrantly public expression of contempt of and for control whatsoever -- this even including the responsible Commanding Officers of the military units and responsible officials of the University, and in violation of what the War and Navy Departments have a right to expect under contractual arrangements. Other enclosures are equally obnoxious in the face of war conditions, and in the matter of the training and morale of uniformed students.

Calling your attention to Paragraphs 1 and 2 above, we consider that the situation is in violation of contractual intent and inimical to the proper, intended, and inherent duties and responsibilities of the Commanding Officers. We therefore request that you cause in the immediate future a meeting of the Board of Regents to the end of bringing the situation in line with the military programs by:--

(a) Suspension of the publication for the duration of whatever time the University is under contract to the War and (or) Navy Departments; or

(b) Place the publication under responsible control and supervision as to its entire content.

/s/

J. F. DONELSON,
Captain, U. S. Navy, (Ret),
Commanding Officer, Navy V-12 Unit.

/s/

JOSEPH D. GARRISON,
Lieutenant Colonel, Infantry,
Commandant, Army Specialized Training
Unit 3873."

ITEM "A":

NAVY DEPARTMENT
BUREAU OF NAVAL PERSONNEL
WASHINGTON, D.C.

C O P Y

P-2426b-Kp
QR/P11-1/V-12

1 July 1943.

NAVY V-12 BULLETIN NO. 36 (SUBJECT C)

From: The Chief of Naval Personnel.
To: The Commandants, All Continental Naval Districts and
The Commandant, Potomac River Naval Command.
The Commanding Officers, All Navy V-12 Units.
Administrative Officers of Colleges and Universities
Having Navy V-12 Units.

Subj: Publicity on Navy V-12 Program.

Encl: (A) Directive, Dir. Pub. Rel. OOR-2 (24185), 28 June 1943.

1. Enclosure (A) is forwarded for the information and guidance of Naval personnel and college and university officials who have responsibilities relating to the issuance of publicity concerning Navy V-12 Units.

/S/ L. E. Denfield

L. E. Denfield
The Assistant Chief of Naval Personnel.

ITEM "B":

C O P Y N A V Y D E P A R T M E N T
Office of Public Relations OOR-2(24185)
Washington, D. C.
28 June 1943

From: Secretary of the Navy
(Director of Public Relations)
To: Commandants of all Naval Districts within the Continental
Limits of the United States
(District Public Relations Officers)
Commandant, Potomac River Naval Command
(Public Relations Officer)

Subj: Publicity on Class V-12 Program.

1. Under an agreement reached by the Bureau of Naval Personnel and the Office of Public Relations, each college at which a Class V-12 unit is located will handle publicity emanating from that college with its own publicity facilities and staff, working closely with the Commanding Officer of the Navy unit.

2. It will be the responsibility of the Commanding Officers of Class V-12 units to see that publicity issued by college publicity staffs is

in line with Navy policy, and it is understood that the Commanding Officers of Class V-12 units will be so instructed by the Bureau of Naval Personnel.

3. Should the Commanding Officers of Class V-12 units require assistance and advice in policy matters, such assistance will be requested from the Commandants of all Naval Districts (District Public Relations Officers) and Commandant, Potomac River Naval Command (Public Relations Officer).
4. It is requested that the Commandants of All Naval Districts (District Public Relations Officers), and Commandant, Potomac River Naval Command (Public Relations Officer), advise the colleges where Class V-12 units are located that they are available for any assistance desired, and will provide such assistance as is requested.
5. No particular efforts need be made by the Commandants of all Naval Districts (District Public Relations Officers) and Commandant, Potomac River Naval Command (Public Relations Officer), to initiate or stimulate publicity concerning the Class V-12 Program emanating from Class V-12 colleges.

LELAND P. LOVETTE

ITEM "C"

Extract from the front page of the Oklahoma Daily, Thursday 30 September 1943.

"TRAINEE WITH POLIO
IS IMPROVING AT
NAVAL HOSPITAL

"Improvement in the condition of Philip Chesebrough, V-12 trainee who is in the south base hospital with polio, was reported Wednesday by naval hospital authorities.

"Chesebrough, a second-semester freshman from Stockton, Cal., entered the university infirmary September 13 and was removed to the naval hospital a few hours later. He lives at the Sigma Chi house.

"Miss Katherine Fleming, superintendent, said that he was isolated

while in the infirmary and that spread of the disease is unlikely.

"In Cleveland county at the present time there are six other cases, Dr. Gertrude Nielsen, director of the county health unit, reported. However, all except one are outside of Norman.

"Chesebrough is the only university student to be stricken with polio which has been widespread this summer."

ITEM "D":

EXTRACT FROM THE OKLAHOMA DAILY
Page 2, Friday October 1, 1943

"A Nichols' Worth

"Occasionally something happens on the campus which some officials feel should remain secret. If they have valid reasons for not releasing the information and if those reasons are explained to the Daily, the event is never mentioned in print.

"Confidences and "off the record" news revealed to the Daily are treated as secrets. This has been the policy of newspapers for years. Too many times officials fail to trust papers. When something occurs which they do not wish publicized, they swear all involved to secrecy. However, some incidents are often too big to remain unknown. Someone will casually remark about the event. Someone else will repeat it until it reaches a reporter. He checks the facts, talks with persons concerned and writes a story.

"Then when it is printed, the individuals who tried to cover it up start screaming about the irresponsibility of the Daily and how it only tries to be a nuisance. If these persons would approach the matter with foresight, their troubles would be over.

"Anytime there is something which is harmful, the Daily does not seek to print it--contrary to some views. But when a story is stumbled upon and when there are no apparent reasons for ignoring it, the event will be written up.

MILDRED NICHOLS."

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ITEM "E":

Editorial, The Oklahoma Daily, Thursday 30 September 1943.

PHARMACY BUILDING IS UNSAFE

"Attention, university and military officials! Many civilian army and navy students here are going to classes in a firetrap --the Pharmacy building.

"There are only two exits from the building, both opening off one stairway. There are no fire escapes. Furthermore, the windows are covered by heavy outside screens.

"Although no one is looking forward to a fire or explosion in the Pharmacy building, it is not an impossibility. In the laboratories and storage rooms are kept several chemicals and solutions which are highly explosive. An accident almost anywhere in the building could easily trap dozens of people in a wing or on the second or third floor. Anyone who managed to escape by a window might possibly spend the next few months in the infirmary with a broken leg or worse.

"The university utilities department maintains that there is no material available for fire escapes. Surely the government would grant priorities on building materials which would be used to insure the safety of servicemen and civilians in a state educational institution.

"Although there seems to be no imminent danger, and the greatest care is always taken in the pharmacy labs, it would be advisable to think now about the proverbial ounce of prevention.

—Cecile Davis."

President Brandt stated the editor and managing editor, after the first example of prevailing difficulties, were called into conference and informed of their responsibilities and the regulations as regards news releases.

Following a discussion of the matter, Regent Hopper moved and it was unanimously voted "that the position of a faculty news and editorial director of all University student publications be created."

President Brandt recommended that Stewart Harral, Director of Press Relations, be named Faculty News and Editorial Director of all University Student Publications.

On motion by Regent Hopper, the President's recommendation was unanimously adopted.

Regent Wallace made the following motion: "That all of the members of the Publications Board, the Business Manager of Student Publications, the members of the Journalism Press, Inc., as well as all employees of Student Publications be notified of the appointment of the Faculty News and Editorial Director of all University Student Publications and his authority."

The motion was unanimously adopted.

The following statement for release was approved:

"During the war emergency when the primary function of the University of Oklahoma is the training of men who are in the armed services, it is of the greatest importance that University publications cooperate fully with the administration of the University and the commanding officers of the army and navy training programs. In order to insure the maximum responsibility necessary at this time, a faculty news and editorial director of all University student publications has been named."

Captain Donelson expressed appreciation for the opportunity of appearing before the Board and for the Board's action in this matter. He retired from the meeting.

President Brandt requested authorization to build three fireplaces in the Community Building of the Dormitory Project which had been originally included in the plans but omitted by the National Housing Agency. He stated these fireplaces would add much to the comfort and enjoyment of the building. The cost has been estimated at approximately \$ 1,400.00.

Following a discussion of the matter, Regent Noble moved "that the President's recommendation on the fireplaces be approved if Heatolator type fireplaces are installed and that non-state derived funds be used for this work."

The motion was unanimously adopted.

President Brandt handed to the President of the Board the following letter submitting his resignation as President of the University "effective not later than January 1, 1944," and the Secretary was asked to read the letter, a copy of which follows:

"October 1, 1943.

Dear Joe:

I herewith submit to the Board of Regents my resignation as President of the University of Oklahoma to become effective not later than January 1, 1944. I have accepted the Directorship of the University of Chicago Press.

As most of the members of the Board know, I came to the presidency with the greatest reluctance and felt I was making a real sacrifice when I gave up my chosen profession of publishing. I finally came because of a great personal love for the University of Oklahoma and because I saw here an opportunity to do some progressive creative work in the field of higher education.

While circumstances beyond my control have blocked my way toward accomplishing many of the creative things I wanted to do, we have been able to do much to advance the University. The educational pattern being formed here has brought the University to the forefront nationally; we have instituted a freshman house plan filled with the greatest promise for good for the future of the University and its students; we have begun a housing program for men which is the best in the state; and we have been able to make a start toward enriching the role of the faculty members in the creation of a University.

The war, of course, has complicated the picture and created manifold difficulties, but that factor has in no way influenced me in my decision. The complications and extra work and worry and confusion resulting from a war-dominated campus is merely my part in the war effort and I have been glad to have a chance to throw my energies into something that has been a vital part of the war effort.

The factor that determined me some months ago that I would return to publishing when the proper opportunity came to me was the one which has faced every president since this University's inception and which will make continued progress here extremely difficult, no matter who becomes president. When this institution was compelled to take a fifteen per cent reduction in appropriations last spring (and to my knowledge Oklahoma was the only state which reduced appropriations for higher education), I knew that there was little hope for the future. I could not leave honorably at the time of this budget reduction, because I felt bound not only to resolve the problem which that reduction created, but also to complete for the University the armed forces programs and to seek completion, if possible, of the war dormitory project. By December, the armed service program for the University will have been completed; the dormitories will be ready for dedication sometime in November; and the additional armed service programs should permit us to make some necessary adjustments in the budget. My successor can then take over a university in sound financial condition, even if such condition is at the expense of faculty members in part, and can devote himself as I have not been able to do for the past year, to the problems of the campus.

While I made it clear at the time I came down to Norman that I did not propose to make a university presidency my career, I had hoped to continue with my work here for a longer period, but one does not choose the time when opportunity knocks. This offer from Chicago, which came

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like a bolt from the blue, I consider the biggest challenge and opportunity I have ever had come my way. I would be doing myself and my family a grave injustice if I were to reject it for the will-of-the-wisp future which the financing of Oklahoma's higher education holds.

I particularly regret that this announcement must be made before the Regents have completed their study of the first year's work of the University College, but on the other hand I have so much faith and confidence that the plan is right that I am willing to let it stand on its merits without any consideration of my personal interest in it. Such a plan is obviously the future of education if Oklahoma is to keep pace with other universities in the future. The University College must stand on its own feet; it represents a principle of education, not a pet idea of mine. Established in a period of strife and transition, the University College must of necessity develop slowly. The Regents propose a three year period for the completion of the plan. In spite of some natural opposition and of the confusion resulting from the many demands made by the war, an efficient administrative organization has been built up during the past year. The proper curriculum pattern will, I feel confident, evolve within this framework.

No president of this university can ever be comfortable as long as he knows that worthy faculty members are eking out an existence at salaries far lower than day wages paid common labor; nor can any president bring in invigorating new and young faculty members with assurance that their gifts can be developed through adequate financial recognition. If Oklahomans would only gain the vision of the real service their university could render, they would feel no pride in a \$ 7,000,000 balance in the state treasury; a balance largely achieved at the expense of education—the foundation stone of the state.

Cordially yours,

/s/ Joseph A. Brandt, President.

B:P

Joe W. McBride,
Anadarko, Oklahoma.

cc: Members of the Board of Regents."

President Brandt was urged to reconsider and there was a discussion of the matter. President Brandt stated it had been difficult for him to reach this decision and that he appreciated the complete cooperation of the Board

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during his term as president, but that he had accepted the Directorship of the University of Chicago Press.

The following resolution was presented by Regent Wallace:

"The Board of Regents accepts the resignation with greatest reluctance and only after the Board had exhausted every means to prevail upon President Brandt to remain with the University as its President."

The resolution was unanimously adopted.

Stewart Harrall, who was attending the Press Association meeting in Oklahoma City, was called before the Board to discuss the situation with reference to the student publications and his appointment as Faculty News and Editorial Director of all University Student Publications.

Following this conference, the meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p. m.



Emil R. Kraettli, Secretary.