

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

SENATE ASSEMBLY

Minutes of Assembly Meeting, March 15, 1976

- ATTENDANCE      Present: Professors Baublis, Bishop, Browder, Brown, Rucknagel, Malvitz, Cosand, DeKornfeld, Dernberger, Eisley, Gikas, Gray, Hildebrandt, Ilie, Jones, Kachaturoff, Kaplan, Kelsey, Kish, L., Leary, Lehmann, Olson, Lindberg, Livermore, Lytle, George, Asgar, Nesbitt, Scott, Krahmalkov, Sherman, Soucek, Stross, Taren, Terwilliger, Van der Voo, Votaw, Weeks, West, Williams, Hoch, Colburn, Johnson
- Absent: Professors Adams, Berki, Bornstein, Child, Christensen, Corpron, Browne, Deskins, Flynn, Smith, Guinn, Harris, Hoffman, Horsley, Edwards, Kessler, Kish, G., Lands, Lucchesi, Mullen, Murphey, Proctor, Tubergen, Seger, Sibley, Springer, Wilson
- Guests: Professors Bruce Friedman and Frank Whitehouse, and Vice-President Richard Kennedy
- CALL TO ORDER      The meeting was called to order by Chairman Johnson at 3:22 p.m.
- APPROVAL OF MINUTES      The minutes of the Assembly meeting of February 16, 1976 were approved.
- ANNOUNCEMENTS      The following announcements were made by Chairman Johnson for the information of the Assembly.
- a. Attention was directed to the Henry Russel Lecture, to be presented on March 23, 1976.
- b. Professor Brockway, as chairman, and the members of his Research Policies Committee were commended for the care with which they had planned the recent series of forums on research in recombinant DNA, a sentiment that was endorsed unanimously by the Assembly on presentation of a motion to this effect, offered by Professor Williams.
- c. The members were reminded of the forthcoming meeting of the University Senate on April 13 and urged to encourage their colleagues to attend, especially since the agenda would include such timely items as a progress report from Vice-President Overberger on DNA research as well as a discussion of significant governmental trends affecting higher education, President Fleming to be asked to comment on the latter in terms of implications for the University.
- d. Slated for discussion at the April meeting of the Assembly are reports expected to be available from the Committee on the Economic Status of the Faculty as well as from Committee B with respect to research in recombinant DNA.

FREEDOM OF  
SPEECH ON  
CAMPUS

In introducing Professor Friedman, chairman of the Civil Liberties Board, Chairman Johnson pointed out that the Assembly now had before it for discussion and action a statement from the Board on freedom of speech on campus, revised on the basis of reactions expressed by members of the Assembly at their February meeting. Thereupon Professor Lehmann moved that the Assembly adopt the statement as presented, a motion which, having been seconded, was subsequently offered for discussion.

Seeking to sound out his colleagues on the matter, Professor Hildebrandt expressed a reservation with respect to section 9 of the document, proposing that they consider deletion of the sentence proscribing cancellation or adjournment of a meeting under disruptive circumstances. He was particularly reluctant to see the possibility of "adjourning to another time or place" ruled out, an option he wished left to the chairperson or, for that matter, to the group as a whole. He was bothered, too, by the undefined phrase "extended interruption," all of which led him to suggest that the sentence be deleted in toto. In the view of his Board the sentence served a purpose, however, Professor Friedman indicated. Cancelling or adjourning a meeting would penalize those who had come to hear the speaker. Nonetheless, Professor Hildebrandt still felt obliged to offer an amendment, which was seconded, deleting the phrase "adjourning to another time or place." Expressing his opposition, Professor Ilie asserted that invitations to speakers are not ad hoc affairs but represent advance planning and appropriate publicity. People come prepared to hear the presentation; to adjourn a meeting under the circumstances is tantamount to capitulating to disruptive influences. There being no further discussion, a vote was taken and the amendment defeated.

Speaking to the original motion that the Civil Liberties Board statement be adopted as presented, Professor Jones pointed to some language he found troublesome, in particular phrases such as "undue interference" and "extended disruption", whose adjectives he would prefer to see deleted, without, however, intending to inhibit spontaneous emotional reactions. The Board shared this latter concern, Professor Friedman explained, having tried by the choice of such words as "undue" to distinguish between normal expression of emotion, on the one hand, and planned interruption, on the other. Use of the work "extended" had a similar intent. While Professor Jones felt such qualifiers detracted from the prerogatives of a chairperson, the Board, according to Professor Friedman, actually saw them as giving the chair greater latitude, a sentiment in which Professor Weeks concurred, noting that "undue interruption" was to be construed as "inappropriate interruption." Following a few further comments in response to Professor Rucknagel's query concerning the matter of enforcement, the document was adopted as presented in a unanimous vote by the Assembly.

Speaking for its members, Chairman Johnson expressed the appreciation of the Assembly for the care and diligence with which Professor Friedman and the Civil Liberties Board had proceeded in addressing these significant questions on behalf of the University community.

STATE  
RELATIONS  
COMMITTEE

By way of keeping the Assembly abreast of developments in the area of state relations, Professor Whitehouse, chairman of the State Relations Committee, and Vice-President Kennedy had been invited to present progress reports on matters of current interest. Chairman Johnson was pleased to welcome them to the meeting.

Devoting his remarks to the proposed State Board of Higher Education, Professor Whitehouse provided background material against which to view developments. In the process he had occasion to outline the mission of the State Relations Committee, citing its charge, its history, and its efforts to prepare a position statement relative to the proposed Board. In similar fashion, he pointed to a number of developments that had led to the proposal for such a Board, noting, among other things, that while an earlier court decision had granted universities a degree of autonomy, it had at the same time stressed the need for a stronger planning component in higher education. Implementation of such a Board would require revision of the State constitution, something that could probably not be accomplished before this year's elections. Several resolutions are pending in the House and Senate, however, and members of the State Relations Committee have had discussions with legislators meanwhile.

Turning to some related concerns, Professor Whitehouse called attention to the statement of Professor Loomis with respect to boards of control, in which Professor Loomis found it strange that, while membership on such boards is open to students, despite their conflict of interest, no provision existed for faculty representation. Members of the State Relations Committee had mixed feelings on the subject. At the same time, there was strong sentiment in the committee against political answers to educational problems and about legislatures making decisions vital to faculty interests. Quoting from a variety of sources, Professor Whitehouse demonstrated what has happened elsewhere when faculty affairs have been influenced, and sometimes regulated, by others. Hence he stressed the need for the kind of efforts being made by the Association of Michigan Collegiate Faculties to strengthen the bridges between the universities and governmental units.

Suggesting that discussion be deferred until Vice-President Kennedy could likewise report on current developments in the area of state relations, Chairman Johnson invited his comments. Having come to speak primarily on the subject of formula funding, Mr. Kennedy called attention at the outset to an analysis by Professor Kaplan, commending the latter to the members of the Assembly as a concise summary of what is involved. The notion of formula funding had not come as a surprise to the administration, Mr. Kennedy indicated; it was only surprising that the University had not been confronted with it sooner. Outlining the proposal briefly, he noted its three aspects. Part A was intended as a procedure for calculating funding on an equitable basis, comparable programs receiving comparable support. Entering into the calculation would be such features as student credit hours, class size, faculty load and salaries, support personnel, and services. Part B, by contrast, would seek to quantify characteristics distinguishing one institution from another.

Seen by the University as one of the positive aspects of the proposal, this feature would take into account the added costs borne by a university such as ours, with its strong program of research and graduate education. Part C deals with special programs, including those of medical schools, among others.

Perhaps the most positive thing one could say about the proposal at the moment, Vice-President Kennedy declared, was that it contained an admission that over the past years the State had underfunded higher education to the tune of \$68 million, at least making our own claims more credible. On the other hand, the administration saw cause for concern in a number of respects. For one, the projected timetable would initially implement Part A, together with some of Part C. Inasmuch as Part B represents the component that would take account of the unique features of our own program, this delay in its implementation would act to our disadvantage. Part A tends to average us into the State system, overlooking our unique contribution, thus harming our interests. In any case, the University has been asked to respond to the proposal for formula funding and, while no position has yet been taken, the implications are being studied.

Suggesting that Vice-President Kennedy might wish to comment more generally on the State scene, Chairman Johnson invited him to offer some additional observations. The picture looks dismal, Mr. Kennedy felt. While the hearings in Lansing are polite in character, they are not well attended, and those legislators who do appear are frank in pointing out that there is little cause for optimism. The budgetary situation is not a promising one, and no easy solutions are at hand. The legislators are reluctant to enact new taxes in an election year, and with no additional revenues in sight, the outlook is a bleak one.

In opening the foregoing presentations to discussion, Professor Johnson suggested that Professor Kaplan, whose summary of formula funding had been distributed to the members of the Assembly, might desire to offer some additional comments. Professor Kaplan wished but to add that, while one could welcome recognition on the part of the legislature that higher education has been underfunded, faculties had cause for concern at the same time over legislators' insistence on, and interpretation of, "higher productivity". In the last analysis, faculty funding represents a levelling device, he cautioned, and hardly an optimal one. It behooves us, therefore, Chairman Johnson urged, to make our feelings known to the administration. Especially so, Professor Dernberger emphasized, since formula funding can be introduced regardless of the budgetary picture and, once implemented, is bound to have a levelling effect.

The experiences with formula funding in other states vary, Professor Whitehouse reported in response to a question from Professor Easley, so that no conclusive evidence is at hand. Whatever the case, Vice-President Kennedy added, the fact is that, within our state, higher education has suffered over the years in comparison with other priorities, so that the goal of reestablishing its importance becomes a basic one.

The decline began in the late '60's, when legislators became increasingly dissatisfied with the apparent inability of universities to control student activism. More recently, however, the reason seems to have shifted to manpower considerations, legislators seeing universities as preparing students for non-existent jobs and therefore become increasingly unwilling to support such programs.

With discussion having run its course, Chairman Johnson thanked Vice-President Kennedy and Professor Whitehouse and the members of his committee for their diligence in pursuing these matter of central interest to the faculty.

OTHER  
BUSINESS

In response to a question from Professor Rucknagel as to whether SACUA had noted the request of Professor Zorn, chairman of the Committee on Classified Research, for help in reexamining his committee's groundrules, Chairman Johnson indicated that, while SACUA had not dealt with this area recently, it would be willing to explore the matter, reporting back to the Assembly.

With respect to Professor Terwilliger's question as to when the Faculty Handbook might become available, Chairman Johnson was pleased to report that it would go to press very shortly.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Erasmus L. Hoch  
Secretary

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